ATSUSHI OHKUBO

05

# FIRE FORCE

FROM THE CREATOR OF *SOUL EATER*

# FIRE FORCE

05

ATSUSHI OHKUBO

# Risking your life to calm the inferno.

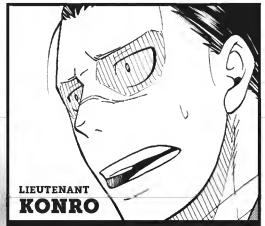
# FIRE FORCE

VOL.5

ATSUSHI OHKUBO

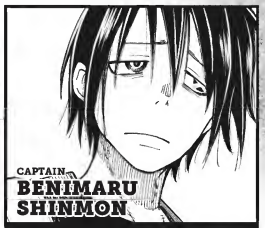
## SPECIAL FIRE FORCE COMPANY 7

An unorthodox company made up of former vigilante corps members?!



LIEUTENANT
### KONRO

The man who is always found at Benimaru's side, addressing him as "Waka." One of Konro's duties is to rein in the combative Benimaru.



CAPTAIN
### BENIMARU SHINMON

The leader of the rough-and-tumble Company 7. There are whispered rumors that he is the toughest soldier on the force. He has little faith in the Great Sun God, and is a proto-nationalist opposed to the reign of the Holy Sol Temple.

### THE INFERNALS

Born from the cryptogenic phenomenon of spontaneous human combustion (SHC), they have no self-awareness, and only wreak havoc until their lives burn out.

### THE WHITE HOODS

An esoteric group that uses bugs to artificially ignite Infernals in their mission to carry out the Evangelist's precepts. They appear to have high-level fighting powers, but there are many aspects of their objective that remain unclear.

MYSTERY-MAN
### JOKER

A mysterious man who once crashed the Fire Force's Rookie Games and attacked fire soldiers. He seems to know something about the fire that took Shinra's family 12 years ago, but...?

TAKES AN INTEREST ➔ MAKES CONTACT

## SUMMARY...

Fire Force Company 1's Lieutenant Rekka Hoshimiya turned out to be a sympathizer of the Evangelist. They finally manage to detain him, but the "white hoods" kill him to keep him from talking. Seeing this as a very serious incident, Raffles III, Sovereign of the Tokyo Empire, assembles the company captains and gives them strict orders to track down the Evangelist. Soon thereafter, the Joker suddenly appears before Shinra, and tells him that if he finds the Evangelist, he'll find his brother, Shō!!

### TAMAKI KOTATSU

HAS HIM ON HER MIND

Originally a rookie member of Company 1, she was caught up in the treasonous plot of her superior officer Hoshimiya, and is currently being disciplined. Obi arranged for her to stay with Company 8. A girl with an unfortunate "lucky lecher lure" condition.

## SPECIAL FIRE FORCE COMPANY 8

SECOND CLASS FIRE SOLDIER (THIRD GENERATION PYROKINETIC)
### ARTHUR BOYLE

Trained at the academy with Shinra. Although he follows his own personal code of chivalry as the self-proclaimed Knight King, he is so incredibly stupid that he will forget which hand is his dominant one. But girls love him. He creates a fire sword with a blade that can cut through most anything.

WATCHES OUT FOR ➔ TRUSTS

CAPTAIN (NON-POWERED)
### AKITARU ŌBI

The popular and charismatic leader of the newly established Company 8. His goal is to investigate the other companies and uncover the truth about spontaneous human combustion. He has no powers, but uses his finely honed muscles as a weapon to accomplish at least as much as the pyrokinetics. Loves bodybuilding to an almost creepy extent.

IDIOT!! ➔ WATCHES OUT FOR ➔ TRUSTS

STRONG BOND

SECOND CLASS FIRE SOLDIER (THIRD GENERATION PYROKINETIC)
### SHINRA KUSAKABE

Since being accused of using his powers to cause the fire that took his family, his face's habit of tensing up into a bizarre smile when he gets nervous has earned him the derisive nickname of "devil." He is searching for his long-lost brother. He dreams of solving the mystery of spontaneous human combustion (SHC) and becoming a life-saving hero!

A NICE GIRL ➔ LOOKS AWESOME ON THE JOB

NUN (NON-POWERED)
### IRIS

A sister of the Holy Sol Temple, her prayers are an indispensable part of extinguishing Infernals. Personality-wise, she is no less than an angel. Her boobs are big. Very big. When enjoying girl talk with Maki, she is, surprisingly, the voice of reason.

A TOUGH BUT WEIRD LADY ➔ HANG IN THERE, ROOKIE!

FIRST CLASS FIRE SOLDIER (SECOND GENERATION PYROKINETIC)
### MAKI OZE

A former member of the military, she is an excellent fighter who controls fire. She's a cool lady, but is mad about love stories, and her beauty is overshadowed by her "head full of flowers and wedding bells." She's friendly, but when anyone comments on her muscles she goes into gorilla cyclops mode.

TERRIFIED ➔ STRICT DISCIPLINARIAN

LIEUTENANT (SECOND GENERATION PYROKINETIC)
### TAKEHISA HINAWA

A dry, unemotional ex-military man. His stern discipline is feared among the new recruits, and he will even shoot them in response to their nonsense. He never allows the soldiers to play with fire. Has odd taste in hats. Is a good cook.

THE GIRLS' CLUB ➔ RESPECTS

# FIRE FORCE 05

## CONTENTS


CHAPTER XXXV:
**THE PROMISE** 007

CHAPTER XXXVI :
**THE ORIGINS OF FIRE FORCE COMPANY 8 PART ONE** 029

CHAPTER XXXVII:
**THE ORIGINS OF FIRE FORCE COMPANY 8 PART TWO** 051

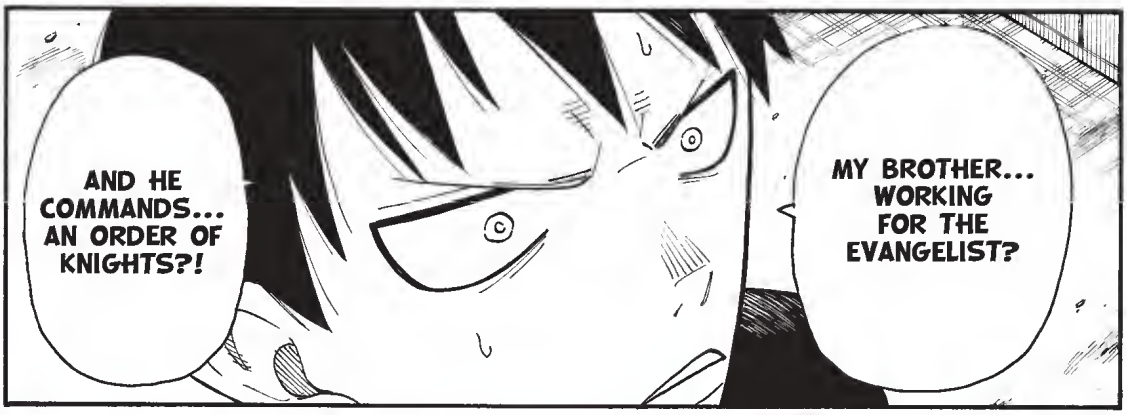
CHAPTER XXXVIII:
**THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE WHITE-CLAD** 073

CHAPTER XXXIX:
**THE GREATEST HIKESHI** 095

CHAPTER XL:
**THE NIGHT BEFORE THE BATTLE OF ASAKUSA** 117

CHAPTER XLI:
**A COMPOSITE FIRE SOLDIER ENRAGED** 137

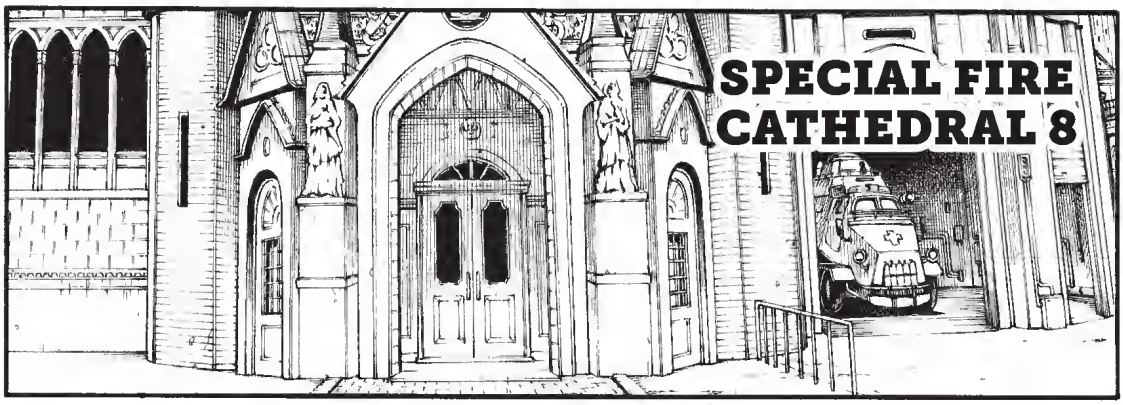
CHAPTER XLII:
**ŌBI VS. BENIMARU** 159


AND HE COMMANDS... AN ORDER OF KNIGHTS?!
MY BROTHER... WORKING FOR THE EVANGELIST?

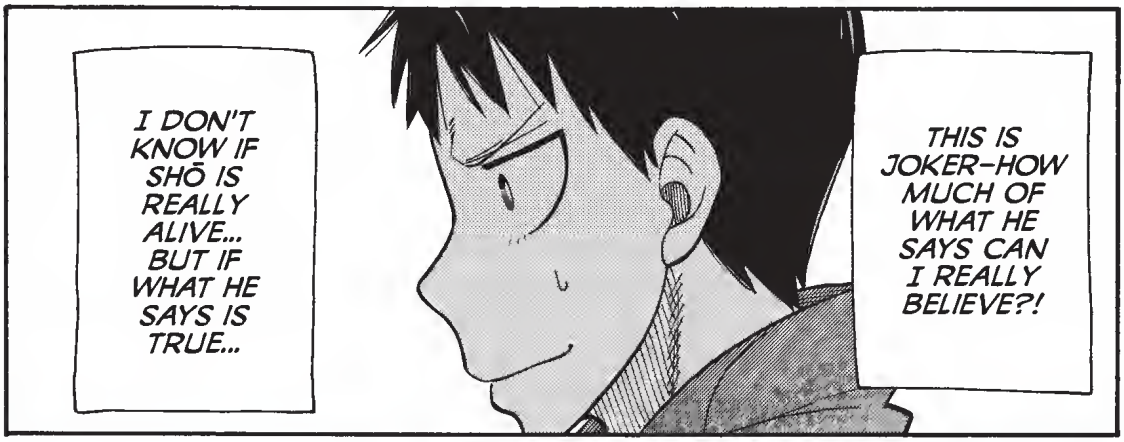
SHŌ? AN ENEMY COMMAND-ER?!

# CHAPTER XXXV: THE PROMISE

W...WAIT!!
JOKER!!
WHIRL
Bye
HELL IS FITTING FOR A DEVIL...
...

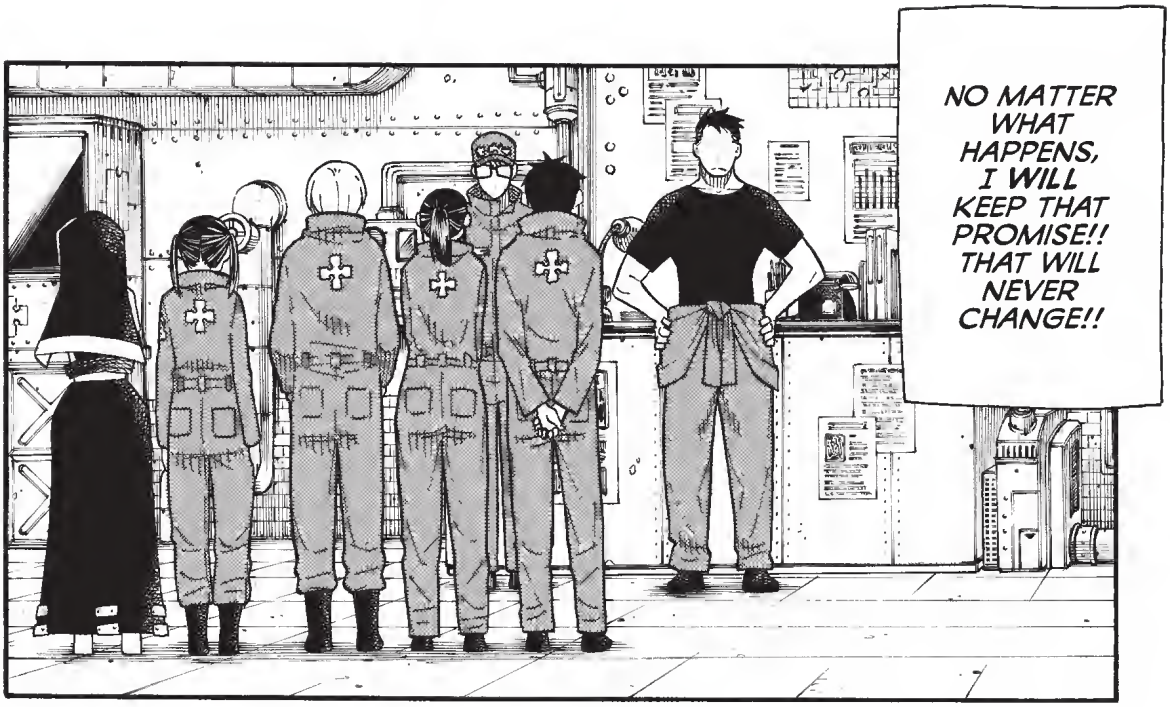

SPECIAL FIRE CATHEDRAL 8

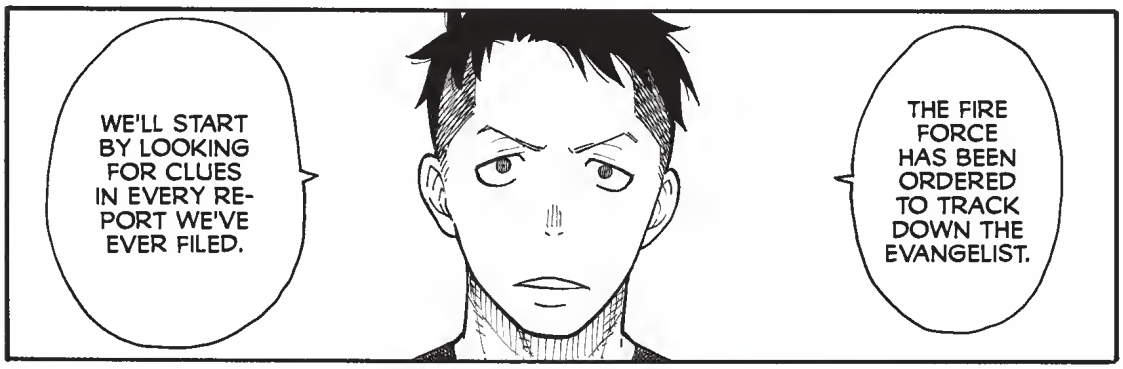
...
8
SLAM

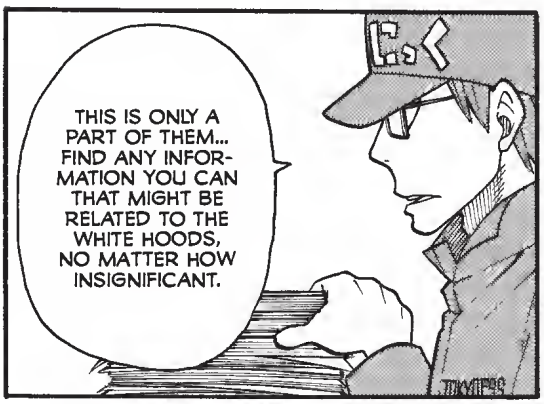

I DON'T KNOW IF SHŌ IS REALLY ALIVE... BUT IF WHAT HE SAYS IS TRUE...
THIS IS JOKER-HOW MUCH OF WHAT HE SAYS CAN I REALLY BELIEVE?!

...THEN WILL I HAVE TO FIGHT MY OWN BROTHER?!

I... HAVE NO IDEA WHAT SHŌ WOULD BE LIKE NOW... OR EVEN WHAT HE'D LOOK LIKE.
WELCOME BACK.
OH. THANKS.
I WAS JUST A KID WHEN WE WERE SEPARATED... AND SHŌ WAS A BABY.
TO BE HONEST, I COULDN'T SAY HOW I WOULD FEEL IF I EVER GOT TO SEE SHŌ AGAIN.
BUT STILL...
"I'M GONNA BE A SUPERHERO AND PROTECT YOU AND SHŌ!!"
THE PROMISE I MADE MOM... FELL APART. THAT PROMISE TIED ME AND MOM AND SHŌ TOGETHER... IT KEPT US TOGETHER AS A FAMILY!!


NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I WILL KEEP THAT PROMISE!! THAT WILL NEVER CHANGE!!


WE'LL START BY LOOKING FOR CLUES IN EVERY RE-PORT WE'VE EVER FILED.
THE FIRE FORCE HAS BEEN ORDERED TO TRACK DOWN THE EVANGELIST.

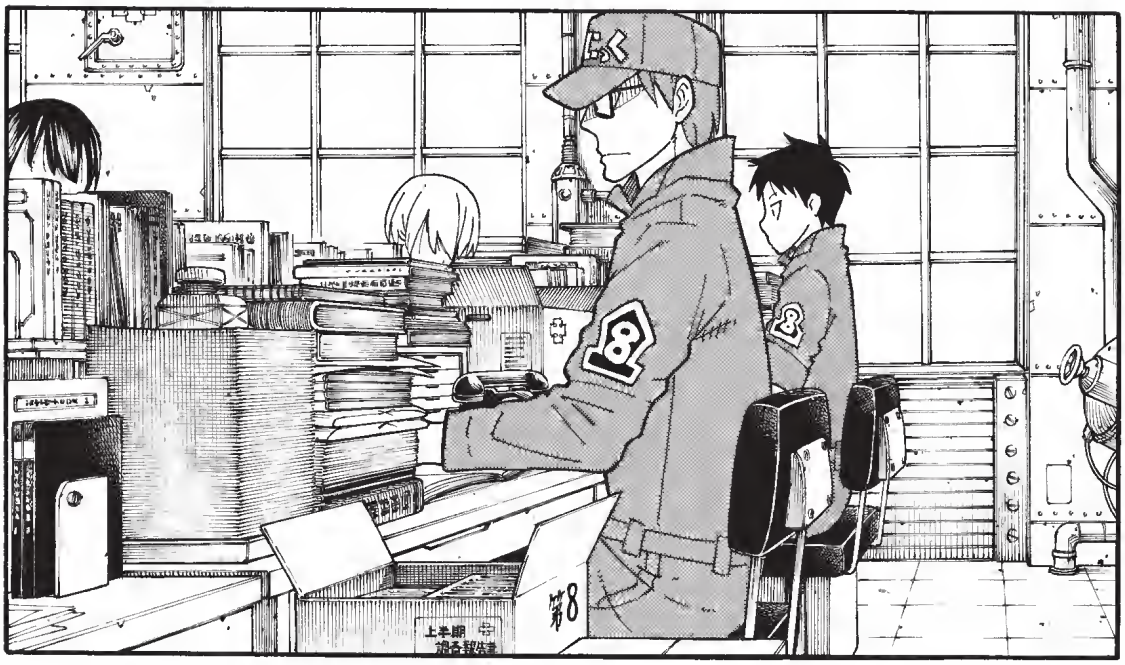

にっく
THIS IS ONLY A PART OF THEM... FIND ANY INFOR-MATION YOU CAN THAT MIGHT BE RELATED TO THE WHITE HOODS, NO MATTER HOW INSIGNIFICANT.

Hat: Organic

THAT'S JUST A PART OF THEM?

ドサ
THUD

WE CAN'T LET A SINGLE ONE OF THEM GET AWAY WITH THIS.
FOR SOME REASON, THE EVANGELIST AND HIS WHITE HOODS ARE INTENTION-ALLY SETTING PEOPLE ON FIRE.
NOT EVEN SHŌ...
...
...
I'M COUNT-ING ON YOU.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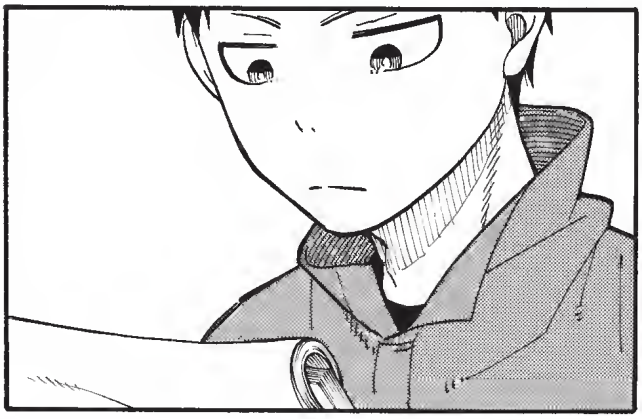
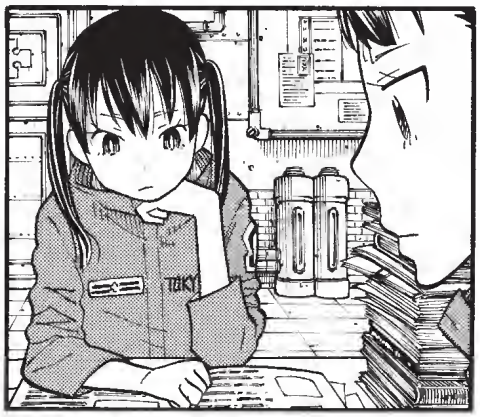
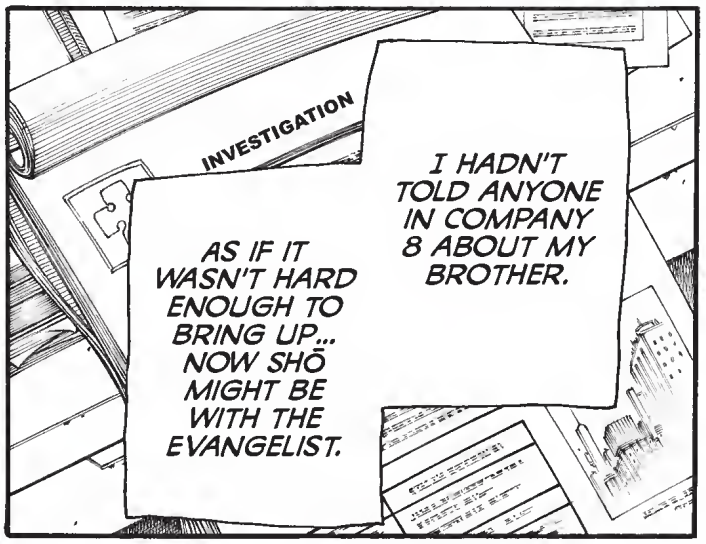




WHEW... FINALLY ABOUT HALFWAY...


INVESTIGATION
I HADN'T TOLD ANYONE IN COMPANY 8 ABOUT MY BROTHER.
AS IF IT WASN'T HARD ENOUGH TO BRING UP... NOW SHŌ MIGHT BE WITH THE EVANGELIST.

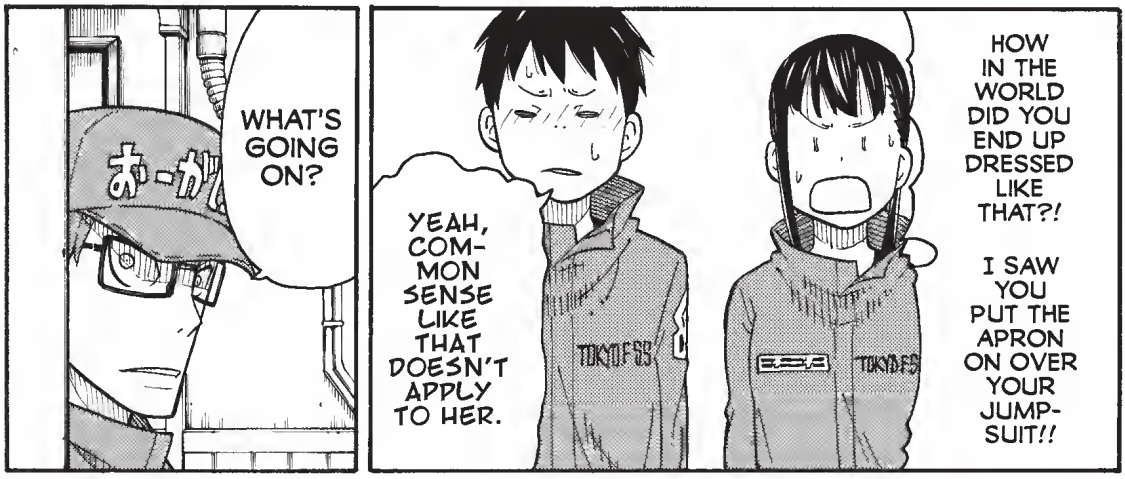
IF IT WAS IN ANY OF THE REPORTS, YOU'D THINK WE'D NOTICE...
NNNNGH... A WHITE-HOODED ORGANIZATION...
FIND A CLUE ALREADY ...
HEY... SHINRA ...
YOU'RE LOOKING A LITTLE GREEN FROM ALL THIS BRAIN WORK... YOU SHOULD JUST KEEP GOING UNTIL YOU DIE.
HM?!
YEAH. ONCE YOU GO IN LOOKING FOR SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS, THEN EVERYTHING STARTS LOOKING SHADY.
MMM!!
I'M NOT FINDING ANYTHING.

DEEEAD
YOU'RE A CANDLE IN THE WIND!
YES!!
MAYBE WE SHOULD TAKE A LITTLE BREAK.
AWW!
COME ON, AR-THUR'S ALMOST DEAD!
LET'S KEEP GOING !!!

I'M IN! ♪
SHOULD WE GIRLS MAKE EVERYONE SOME DINNER?
IRIS-SAMA SHOULD BE GETTING BACK FROM VISITING THE BEREAVED ABOUT NOW.
GRUMBLE
YOU THREE? I'M NOT SURE THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.
WILL THAT BE ALL RIGHT, LIEUTEN-ANT?

...
MAKI-SAN'S HOME COOKING !!
UGH, DON'T BE SO RUDE... WE'LL BE FINE.
WHERE'S YOUR KITCHEN?
...THE REPORT FOR COMPANY 8'S FIRST CALL.
THIS IS...
ピピピ
ガラガッシャーン
CLATTER
CLATTER
CRASH
AAAAHH!!
MAKI-SAN?!
PEEK
IS SOME-THING WRONG?!

DAMMIT!! DON'T LOOK AT ME, KUSAKABE!!


WHAT'S GOING ON?
YEAH, COM-MON SENSE LIKE THAT DOESN'T APPLY TO HER.
HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU END UP DRESSED LIKE THAT?!
I SAW YOU PUT THE APRON ON OVER YOUR JUMP-SUIT!!

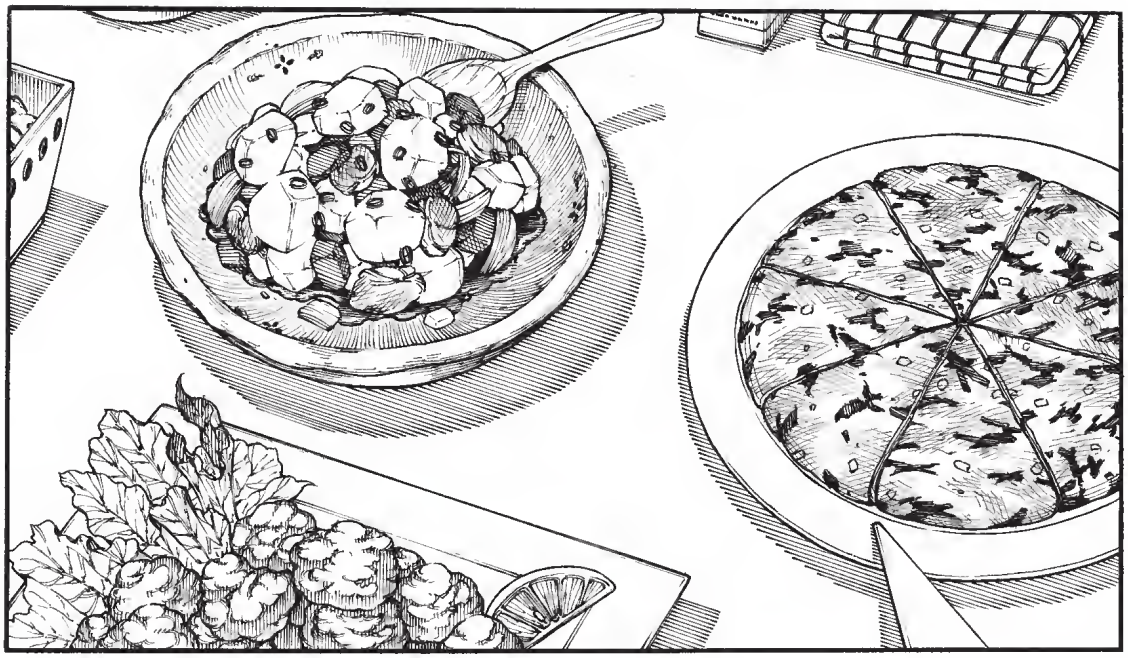
TAMAKI, MAKI, GET BACK TO WORK... I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE FOOD.
SIGH...
SFF
MEOW!
MRROW!
...
HUH?
YES, SIR...
YOU'RE WITH ME, SHINRA.
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE
TOTTER TOTTER
PA-KAM
ALL RIGHT, I HAVE PLENTY TO WORK WITH.

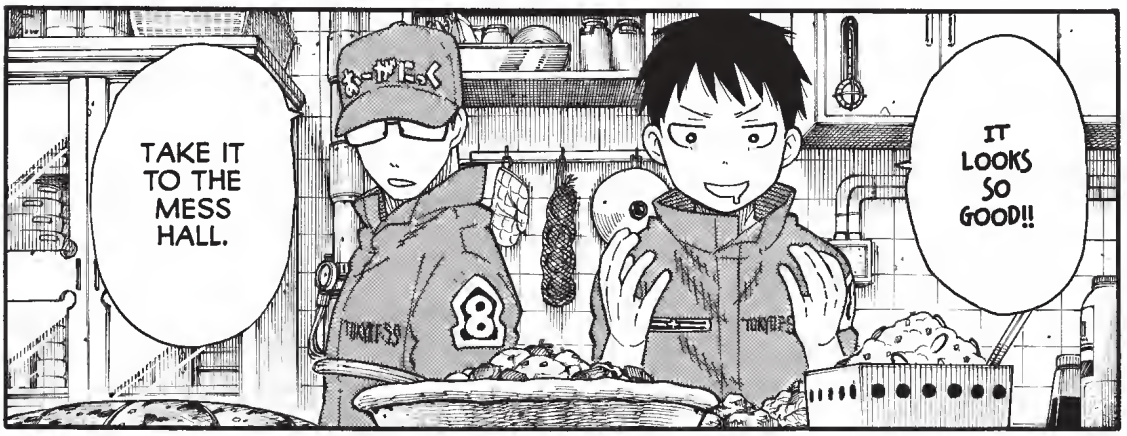
CHOP CHOP
トントン
SPINACH
SHELLFISH
BARGAIN PRICE
SHFF
シャ
SHFF
シャ
CLATTER
カタ
EVERY-THING OKAY?
SHŌ... WHAT DO I DO...?
...HUH ...?

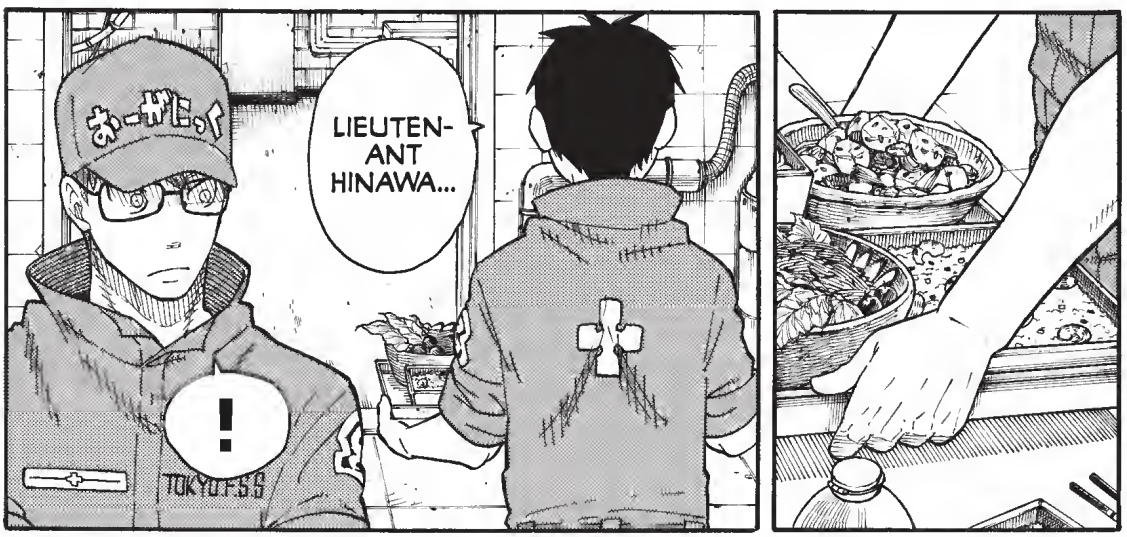
IF YOU CAN'T TELL ME, YOU SHOULD GO TO THE CAPTAIN.
OH, COME ON, SIR! EVEN I CAN PEEL AN ONION.

ZOOM
YES, SIR ...
DON'T STOP WORK-ING!!

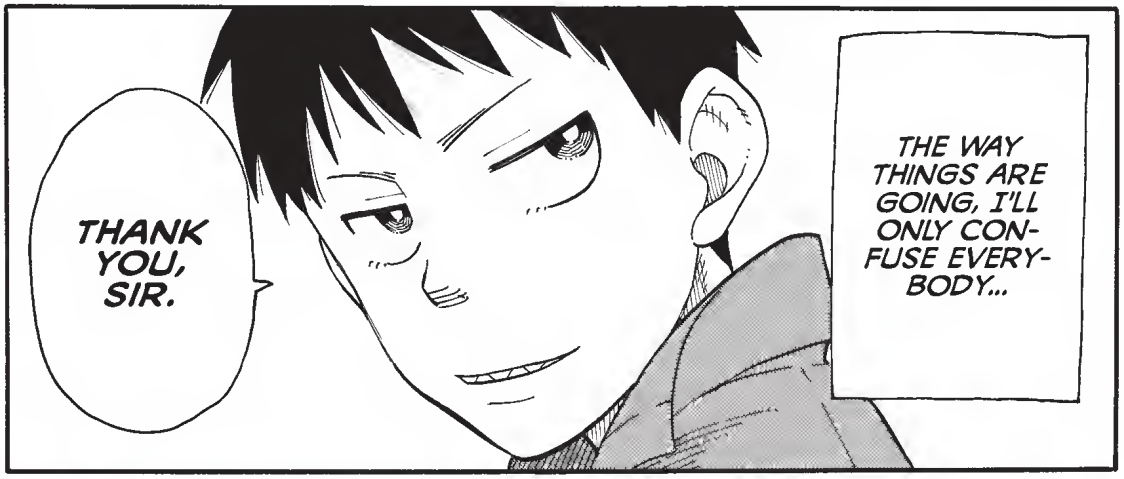
I LIKE COMPANY 8.
AND I WANT YOU NEW RECRUITS TO TRUST US, TOO.
IS THAT A THREAT ...?
MMRUH ...
TWITCH
TWITCH



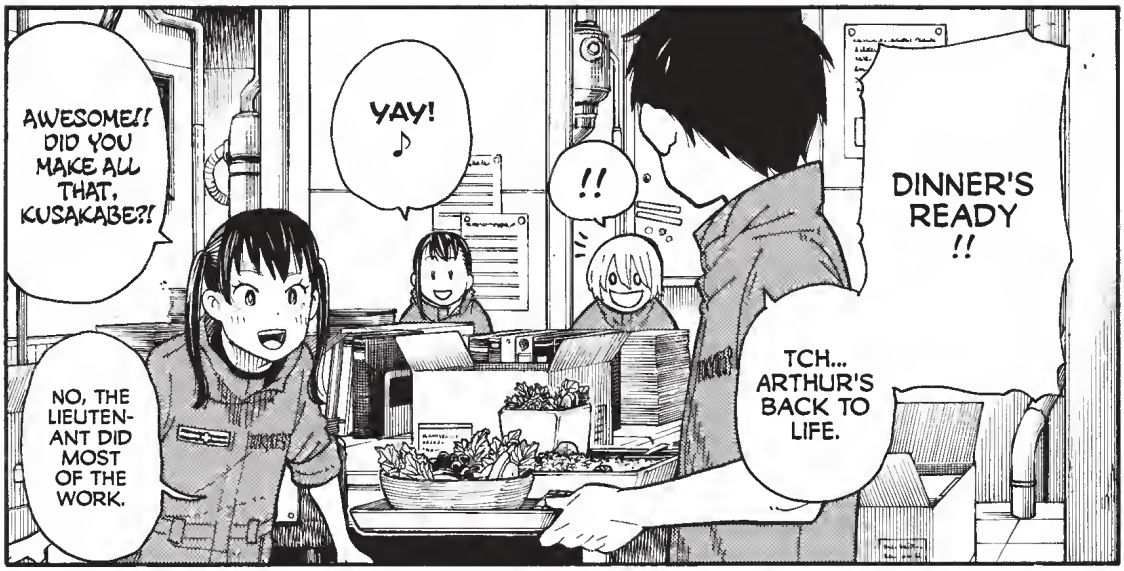

TAKE IT TO THE MESS HALL.
IT LOOKS SO GOOD!!

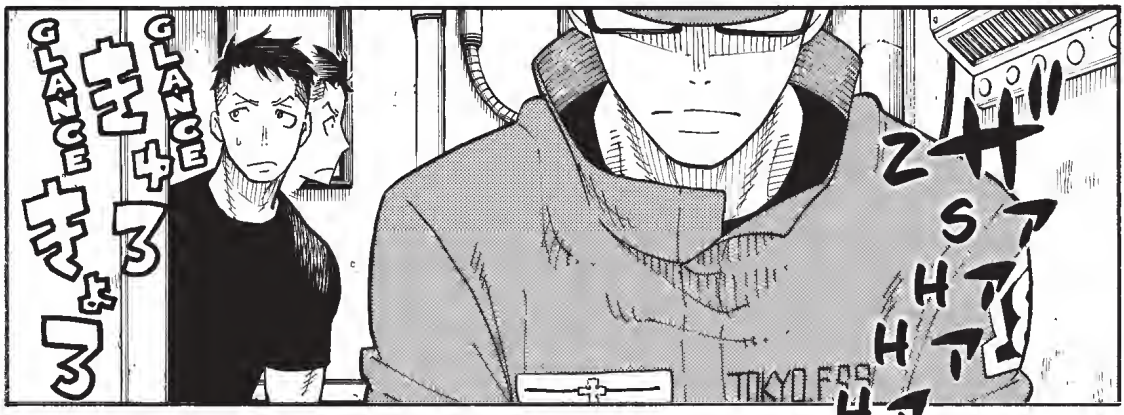

LIEUTEN-ANT HINAWA...
!

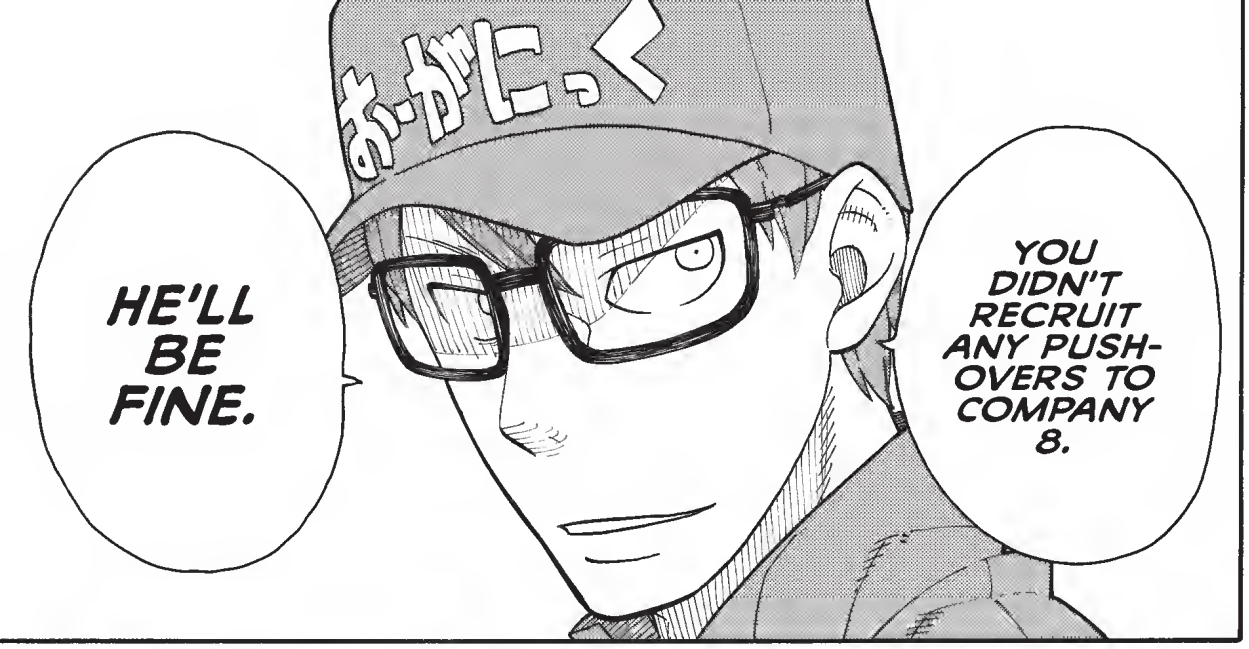
I LIKE COMPANY 8, TOO. I LIKE IT A LOT.
AND I DO TRUST CAPTAIN ŌBI. AND YOU, LIEUTENANT HINAWA.

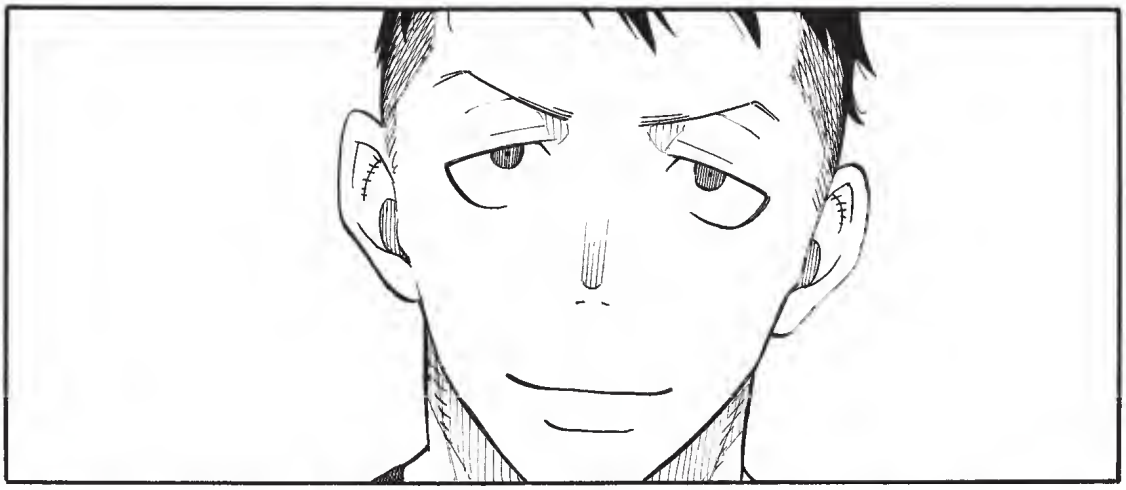

THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING, I'LL ONLY CONFUSE EVERYBODY...
THANK YOU, SIR.

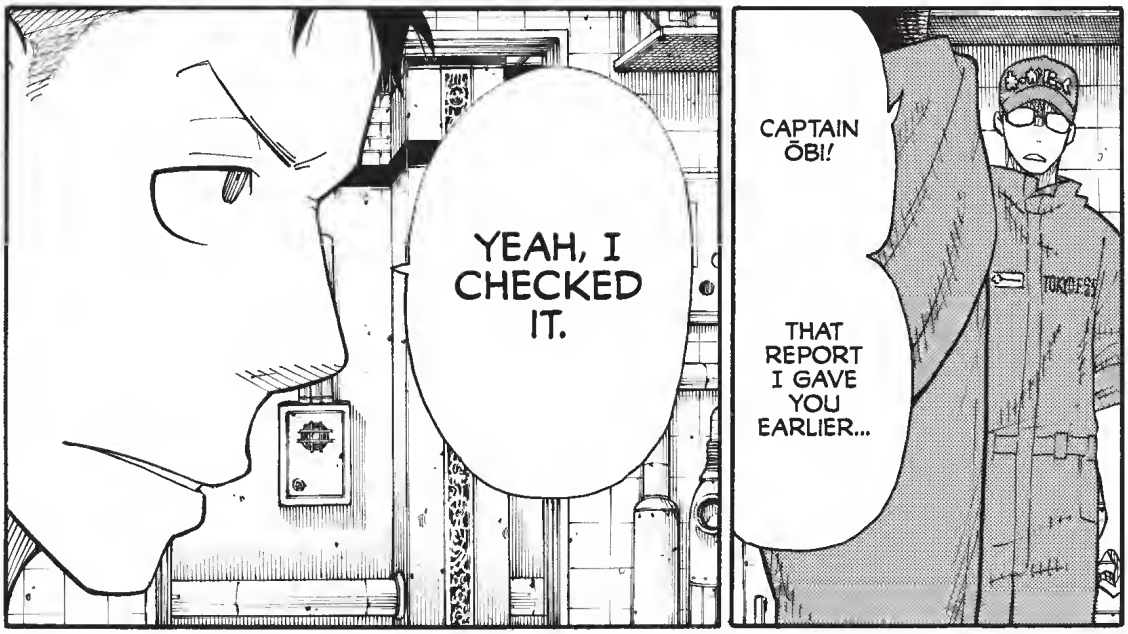
BUT I ALREADY KNOW MY ANSWER.
WHATEVER HAPPENS, SHŌ, I WILL KEEP MY PROMISE.
...I SEE.

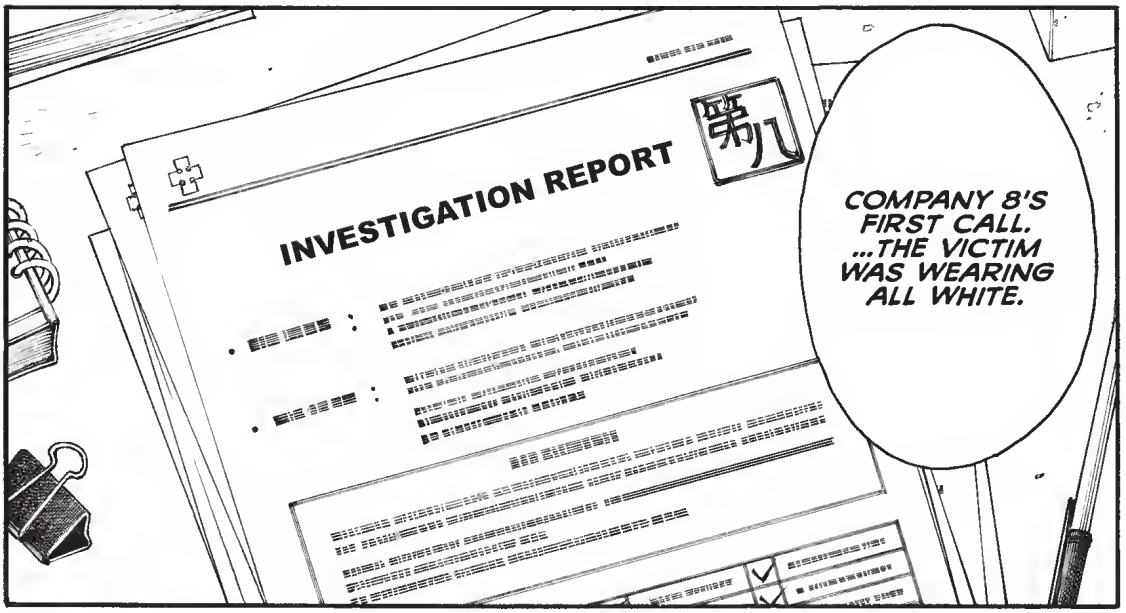

DINNER'S READY !!
!!
YAY! ♪
AWESOME!! DID YOU MAKE ALL THAT, KUSAKABE?!
NO, THE LIEUTEN-ANT DID MOST OF THE WORK.
TCH... ARTHUR'S BACK TO LIFE.

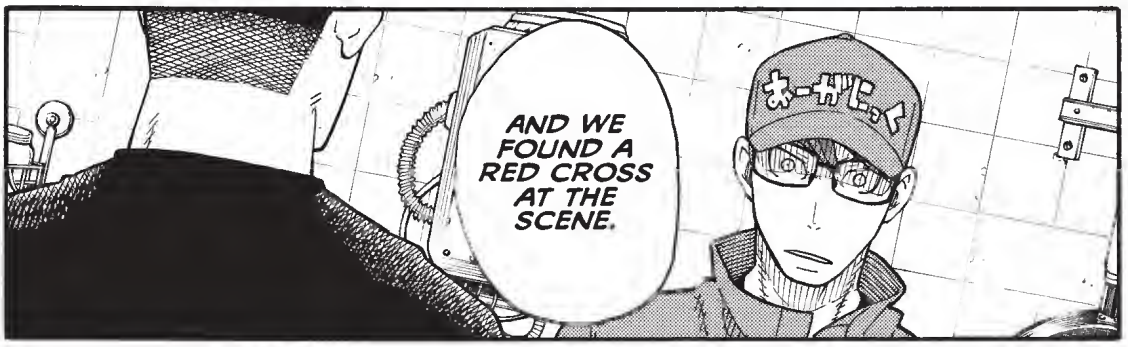

GLANCE
GLANCE
GLANCE
THOSE INVESTIGATIONS ON COMPANY 5 AND COMPANY 1 WOULD HAVE TAKEN A LOT OUT OF HIM.
HOW IS SHINRA DOING?
WIPE
WIPE


HE'LL BE FINE.
YOU DIDN'T RECRUIT ANY PUSH-OVERS TO COMPANY 8.



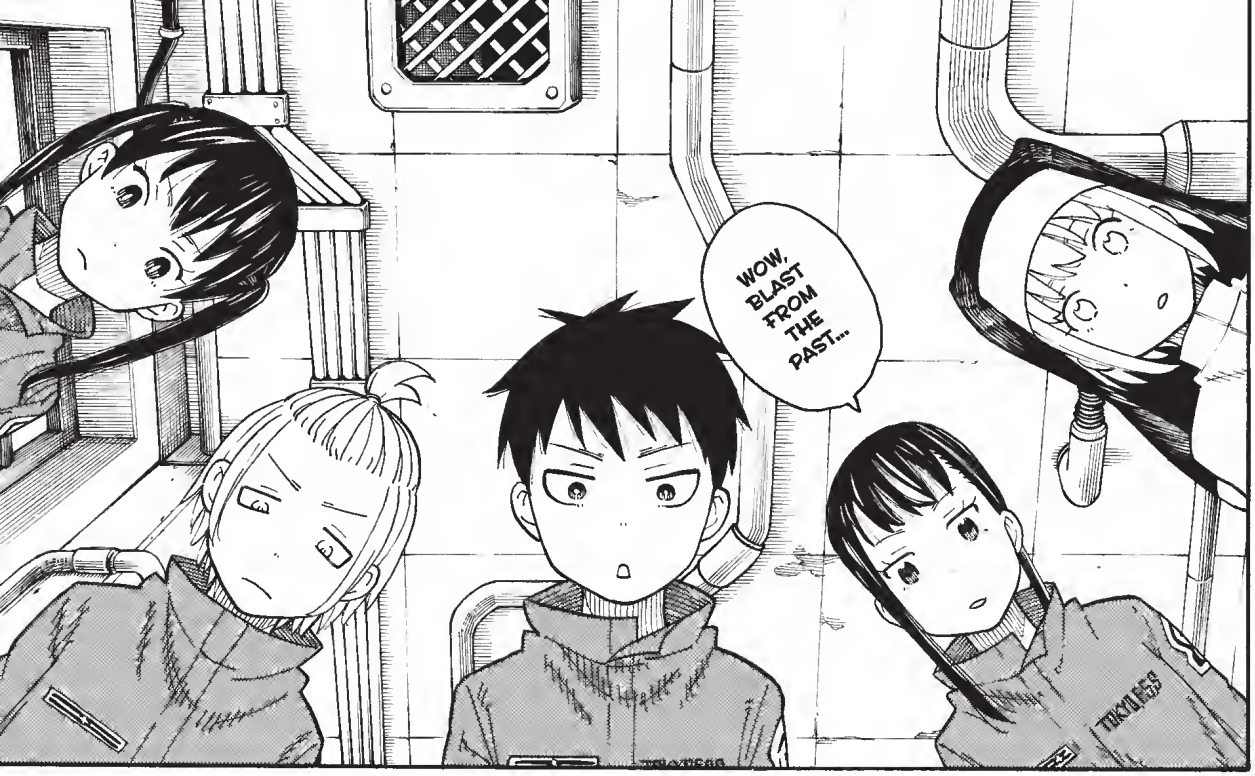

YEAH, I CHECKED IT.
CAPTAIN ŌBI!
THAT REPORT I GAVE YOU EARLIER...

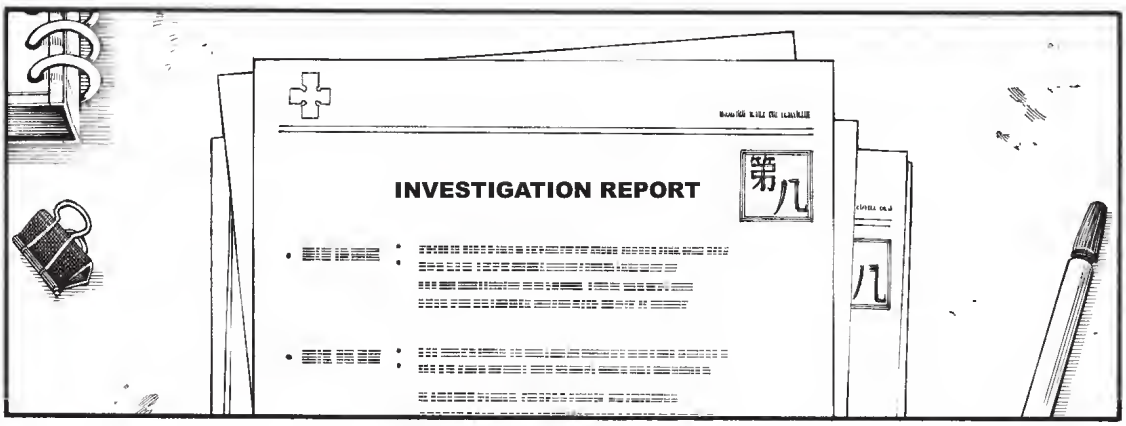

INVESTIGATION REPORT
第八
COMPANY 8'S FIRST CALL. ...THE VICTIM WAS WEARING ALL WHITE.


AND WE FOUND A RED CROSS AT THE SCENE.

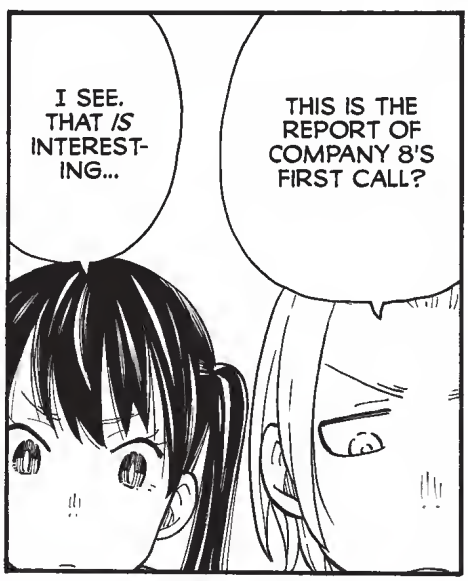
SNIFFLE...
THEY ALL CARE ABOUT ME...
EXCEPT FOR ARTHUR.
HUH?
TAMAKI-CHAN AND IRIS-SAMA AND I WERE TALKING ABOUT IT. DOES YOUR STOMACH HURT OR SOMETHING?
YOU'VE BEEN ACTING STRANGE SINCE YOU GOT BACK.
POKE
POKE

FIRE FORCE


WOW, BLAST FROM THE PAST...
TOKYO ESS

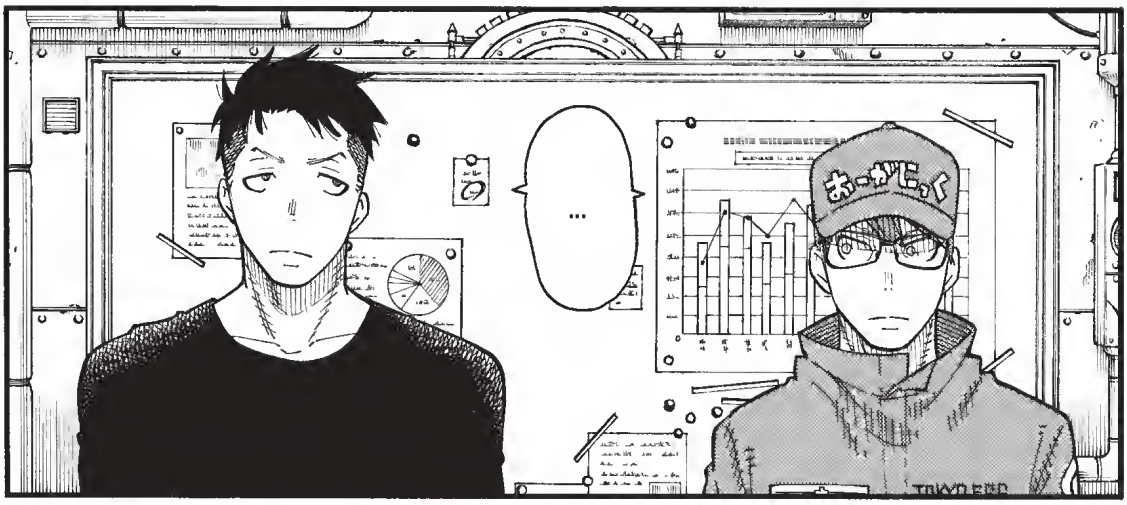

INVESTIGATION REPORT
第八

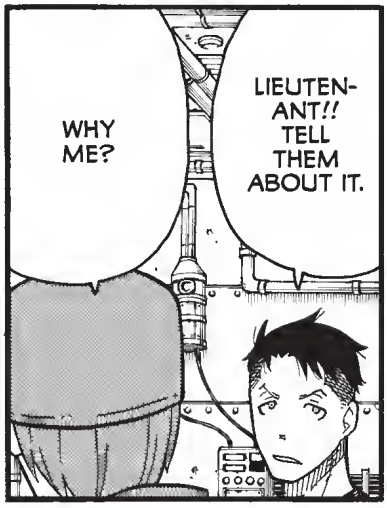
COME TO THINK OF IT, HOW WAS COMPANY 8 FORMED?


I SEE. THAT *IS* INTEREST-ING...
THIS IS THE REPORT OF COMPANY 8'S FIRST CALL?

I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT BEFORE I JOINED, EITHER.

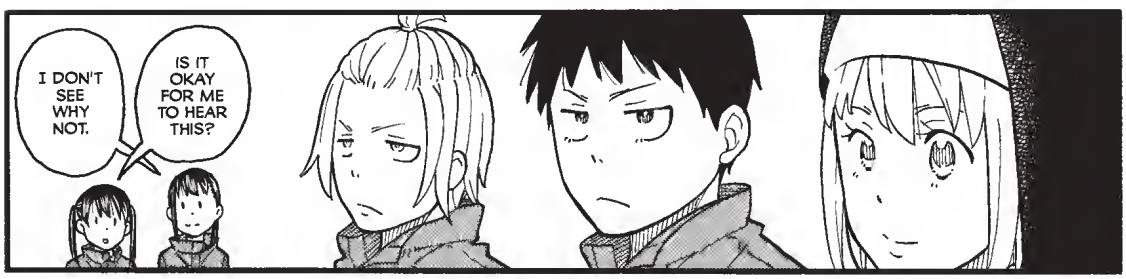
FIRE FORCE


...


WHY ME?
LIEUTEN-ANT!! TELL THEM ABOUT IT.

...
YOU'RE A BETTER TALKER. THAT'S AN OR-DER.

GOOD POINT. WE DO HAVE SOME NEW MEMBERS, AND IT WILL BE GOOD FOR THEM TO KNOW WHAT COMPANY 8 IS ALL ABOUT.


I DON'T SEE WHY NOT.
IS IT OKAY FOR ME TO HEAR THIS?

Sign: Tokyo Imperial Army

# CHAPTER XXXVI: THE ORIGINS OF FIRE FORCE COMPANY 8
## PART ONE

GLARE
GNG
I'M SEEING MORE AND MORE REPORTS OF INFERNAL BREAKOUTS THESE DAYS.
MAYBE WE SHOULD BE DOING MORE THAN JUST PATROLLING AND ROUNDING UP CRIMINALS.
MUNCH
MUNCH
DON'T GET ANY FUNNY IDEAS. INFERNALS ARE THE SPECIAL FIRE FORCE'S JURISDICTION.
SERGEANT HINAWA!

I'LL BE GOING NOW, SIR!
FIP 11
!
WILL SHE BE OKAY?
SHE'S ALL SKIN AND BONES...
PRIVATE MAKI OZE, THE LIEUTENANT-GENERAL'S DAUGHTER.
カチャ
KA-CHAK
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER AROUND.
IS SHE WHO I THINK SHE IS?

WOW. NOT WHAT I'D EXPECT FROM A SPOILED GENERAL'S DAUGHTER.
SHE WORKS TWICE AS HARD AS ANY-ONE ELSE. IN TRAINING, SHE ALWAYS GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND.
SHE'LL FLESH OUT THOSE MUSCLES SOON ENOUGH.
I SEE HER BREAKING UNDER THE PRESSURE AND HAVING A MELTDOWN.
BUT SHE'S STILL A SHEL-TERED LITTLE PRINCESS WHO GOT IN WITH DADDY'S CONNEC-TIONS.
SHE'S TOO NICE. ...SHE'S HOPELESSLY UNFIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE.
SHE MIGHT AS WELL BE A LAZY SLACKER.
WORKING TOWARD A LOST CAUSE DOESN'T COUNT AS WORK.
IF SHE'S TRYING SO HARD, WHY DON'T YOU HELP HER OUT?
YOU'RE ALWAYS SO CRITI-CAL.
ALL HER HARD WORK IS GOING TO GO TO WASTE.

YOU ONLY THINK THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE SUCH A SOFTIE, TOJO.

COME ON... HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? SHE'S A CUTE GIRL DOING HER BEST.

!

CLINK

I TOOK A PAGE FROM THE SPECIAL FIRE FORCE'S BOOK AND BROUGHT IT TO CHURCH TO GET IT BAPTIZED.

A USP 9 MM. WHAT ABOUT IT?

...

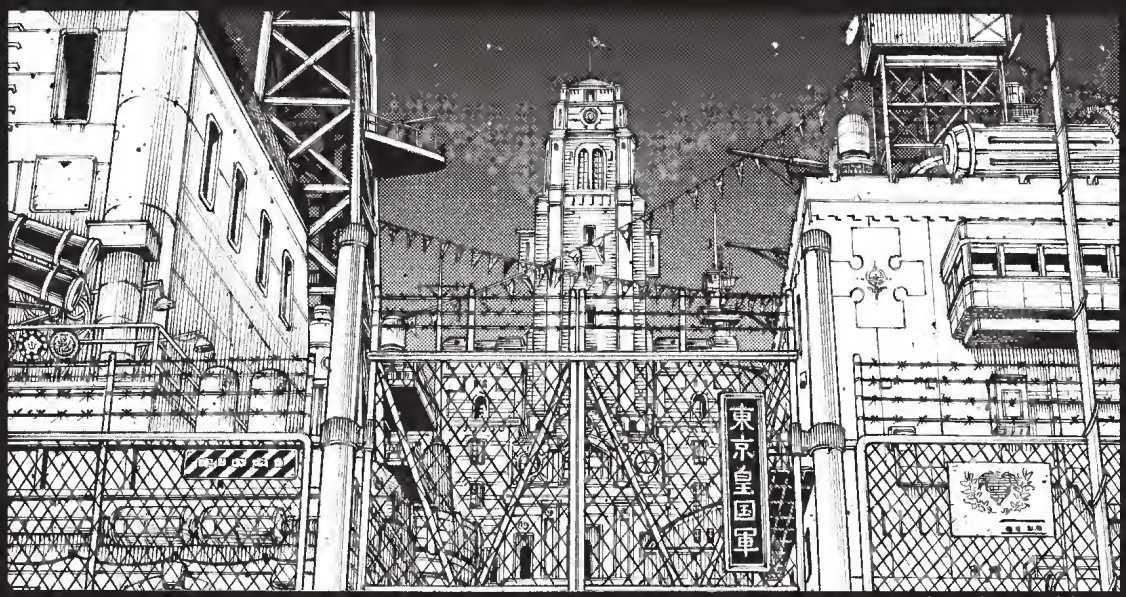
*WAS* IT WASTED?

THINK ABOUT IT. IF YOU WERE GONNA GET SHOT, WOULD YOU RATHER IT BE BY A BAPTIZED GUN, OR AN UNBAPTIZED GUN?

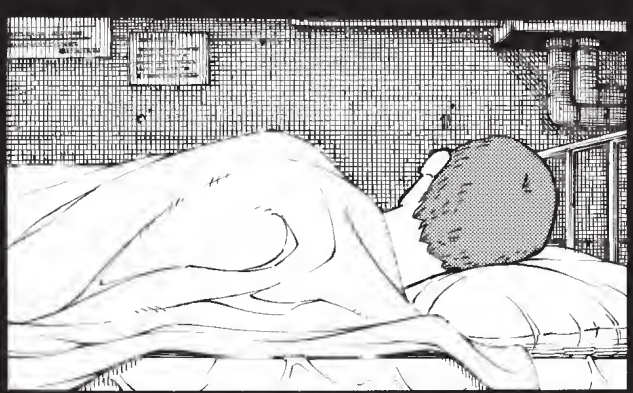
TALK ABOUT WASTED EFFORT.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, HINAWA?
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO CHURCH AND GET YOUR GUN BAPTIZED, TOO, JUST TO SEE HOW IT WORKS OUT?
IT MIGHT CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE A LITTLE.
I DON'T BELIEVE IN ANY "GREAT SUN GOD." AND YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER OF THE HOLY SOL TEMPLE, EITHER.
BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE GETTING A GUN BAPTIZED IS GOING TO CHANGE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU FIRE IT.
I'VE KNOWN YOU A LONG TIME... AND I KNEW YOU'D SAY THAT.
...
カチャ
CLACK
WHY DOES A NICE GUY LIKE YOU WASTE HIS TIME WITH A GUY LIKE ME?

YOU'RE NOT AS HEART-LESS AS YOU THINK YOU ARE, HINAWA.
SEE? YOU PICKED UP MY TRAY FOR ME.
...
...
PICKING UP TWO TRAYS IS NO DIFFER-ENT THAN PICKING UP ONE. I'M JUST THINKING RATIO-NALLY.
AND YOU'RE SAYING PICKING UP ONE TRAY MAKES ME A GOOD PERSON? YOU'RE GONNA BE DUPED BY ANOTHER EVIL WOMAN BE-FORE LONG.
YEAH, I HAVE BEEN HURT A FEW TIMES.
HA, HA, HA, HA.




Sign: Tokyo Imperial Army



SOME-
THING'S
BURN-
ING.
...
!
SNIFF
SNIFF
FWISH
SIZZLE
SIZZLE
GWAAAAAHHH!!
HA
HA
HA
HA

KA-CHAK
WHAT ?!
TŌJŌ ?!!
FWOOSH

BEFORE I TURN INFER-NAL—
WHILE I'M STILL MY-SELF!!
WHY!!
HINAWA!! SHOOT ME!! PLEASE, YOU HAVE TO SHOOT ME!!
TO
KILL ME EEEE!!
TO
TO
TSH
YOU HAVE TO KILL MEEE!!
CHAK

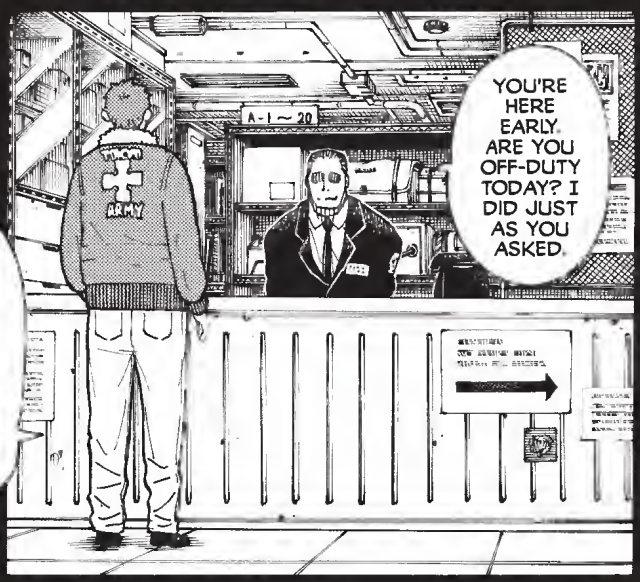
I CAN AT LEAST MAKE IT QUICK!
I'M TŌJŌ'S FRIEND... AND I HAVE TO TAKE HIS LIFE...
ONCE HE'S AN INFERNAL, THE ONLY WAY TO PUT OUT THE FLAMES THAT SURROUND HIM WILL BE TO KILL HIM.
GAAAAA!!
...WOULD YOU RATHER IT BE BY A BAPTIZED GUN, OR AN UNBAPTIZED GUN?
THINK ABOUT IT. IF YOU WERE GONNA GET SHOT...

READY, AIM!!
IT'S NOT SAFE HERE, SERGEANT HINAWA! PLEASE, STAND BACK!!
STAMP
STAMP
STAMP
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
WAIT...

HINAWA... YOU...
THUD
...TARGET NEUTRALIZED.
LAY DOWN SOME FIRE RETAR-DANT SO IT DOESN'T SPREAD.

HOOHH
WHY COULDN'T I DO THAT FOR HIM?
WHY COULDN'T I SHOOT HIM?

A3-059
DN
I RE-REGISTERED THE LATE SECOND LIEUTENANT TŌJŌ'S GUN IN YOUR NAME.


A-1 ~ 20
ARMY
YOU'RE HERE EARLY. ARE YOU OFF-DUTY TODAY? I DID JUST AS YOU ASKED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH...
A MEMENTO OF TŌJŌ...

REQUES
※
ペタン
STAMP

華化
大玉タコ焼き
マルハチ

WHY COULDN'T I SHOOT HIM?

純喫茶

ドオオオン
RRRUUURRR

AN INFERNAL ?!
THE SPECIAL FIRE FORCE...

ゴオオオオ
WHOOSH

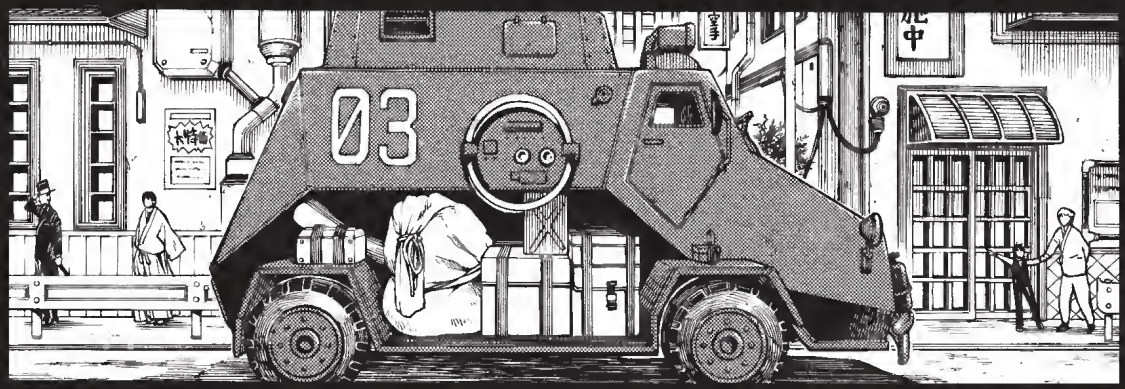
I'M AN ARMY MAN! NOT A FIRE SOLDIER!

WHY AM I FOLLOWING IT?!

FIRE FORCE

FIRE
FORCE

# CHAPTER XXXVII: THE ORIGINS OF FIRE FORCE COMPANY 8
## PART TWO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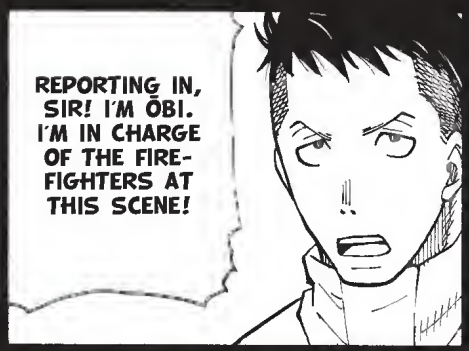
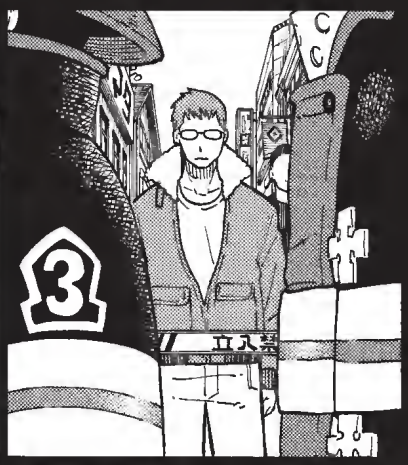

REPORTING IN, SIR! I'M ŌBI. I'M IN CHARGE OF THE FIRE-FIGHTERS AT THIS SCENE!

WHILE THEY PUT OUT THE INFERNAL, WE'LL LEAD THE CIVILIANS TO SAFETY AND KEEP THE FIRE FROM SPREADING!!
THE BLUE STRIPES ARE HERE!!

ZSH
ZSH
FIRESOLDIER
3
TOKYO

I HEARD THERE WERE TWO INFERNALS?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT, BUT THEY ARE NOT CURRENTLY IN THE SAME LOCATION.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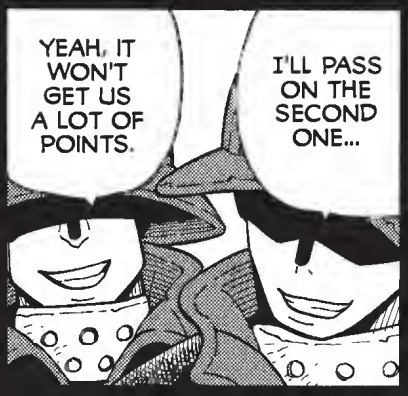

I'LL PASS ON THE SECOND ONE...
YEAH, IT WON'T GET US A LOT OF POINTS.

ONE IS AGGRESSIVE—WE'VE CORDONED OFF THE AREA, BUT HE'S STILL RUNNING AROUND TRYING TO ESCAPE.
THE OTHER IS MORE COMPLACENT—HE'S STAYING PUT INSIDE THIS SHOP.

3
TOKYO
THANKS FOR FILLING ME IN.
YOU REGULAR FIREFIGHTERS STAY OUT OF OUR WAY.

POINTS ...?

...

FIRE SOLDIER 3 TOKYO
YEAH, ALL OUR JOBS HAVE BEEN A BUNCH OF SNOOZE-FESTS LATELY.
SO ONE OF 'EM'S A FIGHTER. THIS SHOULD ACTUALLY BE FUN.
SO WHO'S GONNA GO TAKE CARE OF THE BORING ONE?
立入禁止
立入禁止
IGNORE THE LOW-POINT ONE FOR NOW. IT'S NOT GOING ANY-WHERE.
WE FINALLY GOT A FEISTY ONE.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE SOME OF THEM AREN'T THAT DIFFERENT FROM SOLDIERS IN THE ARMY.
PEOPLE KEEP TALKING ABOUT THE KIND, MERCIFUL FIRE FORCE...

MY HUSBAND IS PATIENTLY ENDURING THE FLAMES...
PLEASE, MISTER FIRE SOLDIER... PLEASE, PUT HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY.
WHEN FIGHTING INFERNALS, CERTAIN THINGS HAVE TO TAKE PRIORITY. WE'LL DECIDE WHAT GETS EXTINGUISHED WHEN.
...WE CAN TAKE THAT ONE DOWN WHENEVER WE WANT.
YOU EXPECT US TO HANG AROUND HERE? THIS IS STUPID.
LET'S GO.
P... PLEASE... COME BACK!!
ZSH
ZSH
...EXCUSE ME, SIR.
!
DO YOU REALLY NEED TO SEND TWO MEN AFTER THE RUNNER?
CAN'T YOU JUST SPLIT YOUR FORCE AND EXTINGUISH BOTH AT ONCE?
SFF
SFF

AND YOU DO THAT BY POINTS, SIR?
WE ARE PROFESSIONALS. WHEN FIGHTING INFERNALS, YOU HAVE TO KNOW HOW TO MAKE THE PROPER CALLS.
THAT'S A LOAD OF CRAP–IT'S NOT ABOUT MORALE. THEY ENJOY FIGHTING INFERNALS.
I RATE THE INFERNALS AND ASSIGN POINTS BASED ON MY MEN'S RESULTS– THAT'S HOW I KEEP THEIR MORALE UP.
BECAUSE, UNLIKE YOU, THEY ARE PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE.
...
YES...
MORALE AIN'T WORTH A DAMN WHEN YOU'RE SNUFFING A HUMAN LIFE, SIR.
KEEP THEIR MORALE UP?

CAPTAIN ŌBI... YOU CAN'T TALK TO A BLUE STRIPE LIKE THAT!
...
WHAM
YOU JUST GET READY TO PUT OUT THE FLAMES WHEN WE'RE DONE.
DON'T TELL US HOW TO DO OUR JOB, AMATEUR.
I KNOW YOU'RE SUFFERING... I'M SO SORRY I CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU...
HANG IN THERE... YOU CAN DO IT.
NOBUO-SAN ...
!
MA'AM, IF YOU DON'T MIND...
BUT... YOU'RE JUST A FIREFIGHTER. ...WOULDN'T IT BE DANGEROUS?
...I WILL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUTTING YOUR HUSBAND TO REST.
DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT ME.

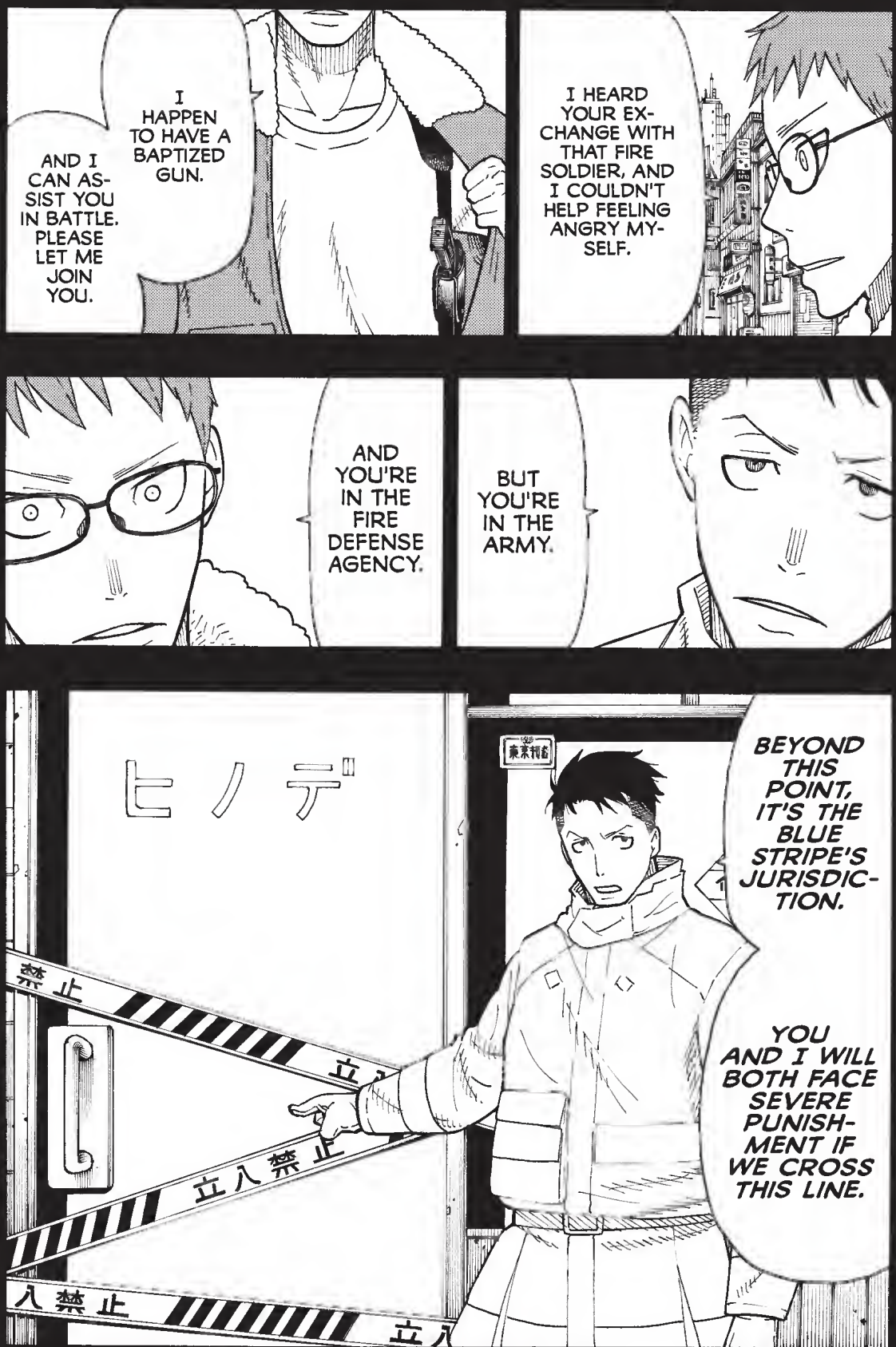
RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE
ゴゾゴゾ
IS THIS THE MATCHBOX THE BLUE STRIPES CAME IN ON?

03

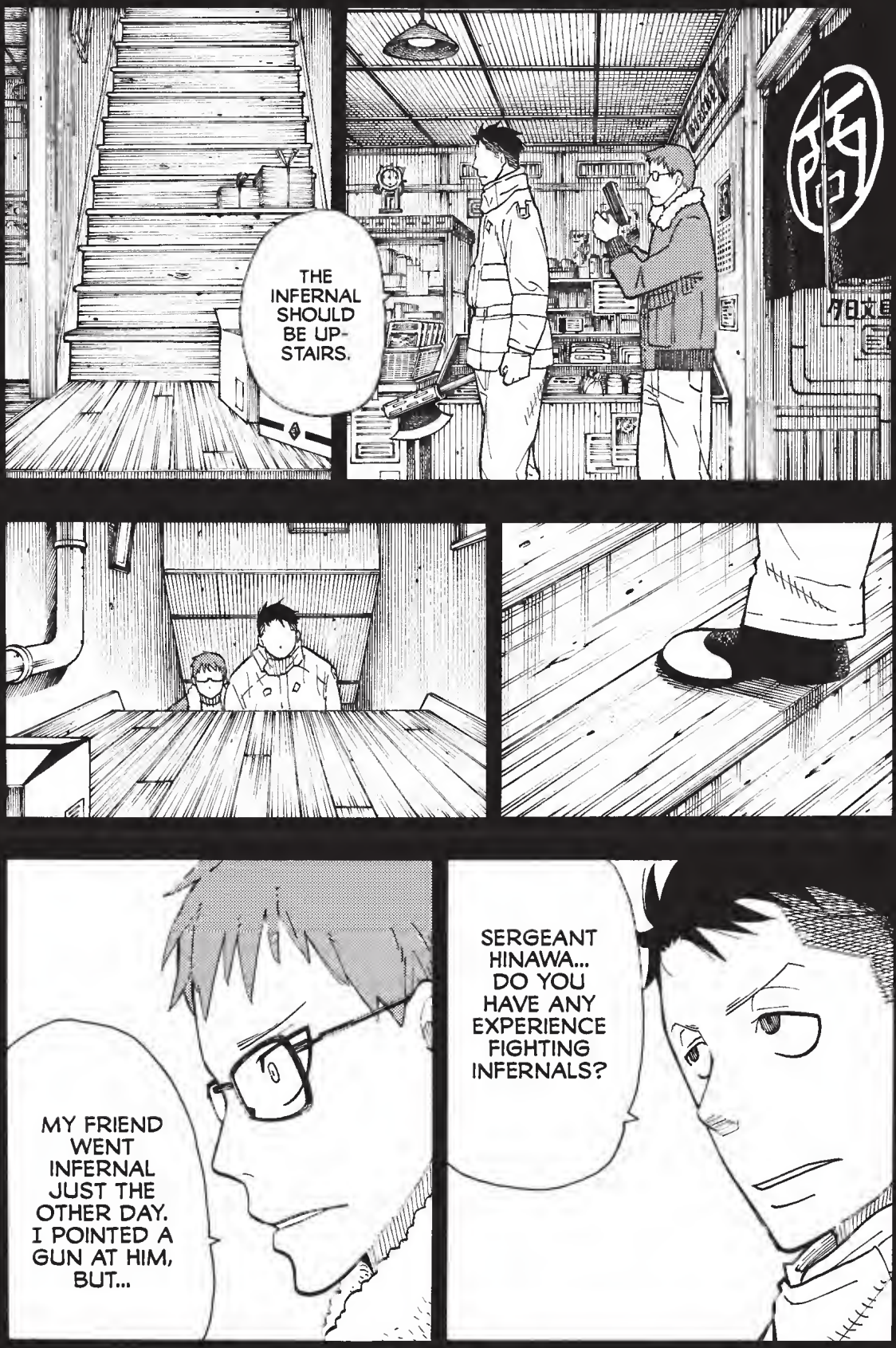
BUT IF THEY LET *THOSE* JERKS USE THEM, THEN SURELY *I* CAN...
A TYPE 7 FIREFIGHTING AX... NOT SURE I KNOW HOW TO USE IT...

SFF
スッ

Store: Sunrise Store


I HAPPEN TO HAVE A BAPTIZED GUN.
AND I CAN ASSIST YOU IN BATTLE. PLEASE LET ME JOIN YOU.
I HEARD YOUR EXCHANGE WITH THAT FIRE SOLDIER, AND I COULDN'T HELP FEELING ANGRY MYSELF.
AND YOU'RE IN THE FIRE DEFENSE AGENCY.
BUT YOU'RE IN THE ARMY.
ヒノデ
BEYOND THIS POINT, IT'S THE BLUE STRIPE'S JURISDICTION.
YOU AND I WILL BOTH FACE SEVERE PUNISHMENT IF WE CROSS THIS LINE.
禁止
立入禁止

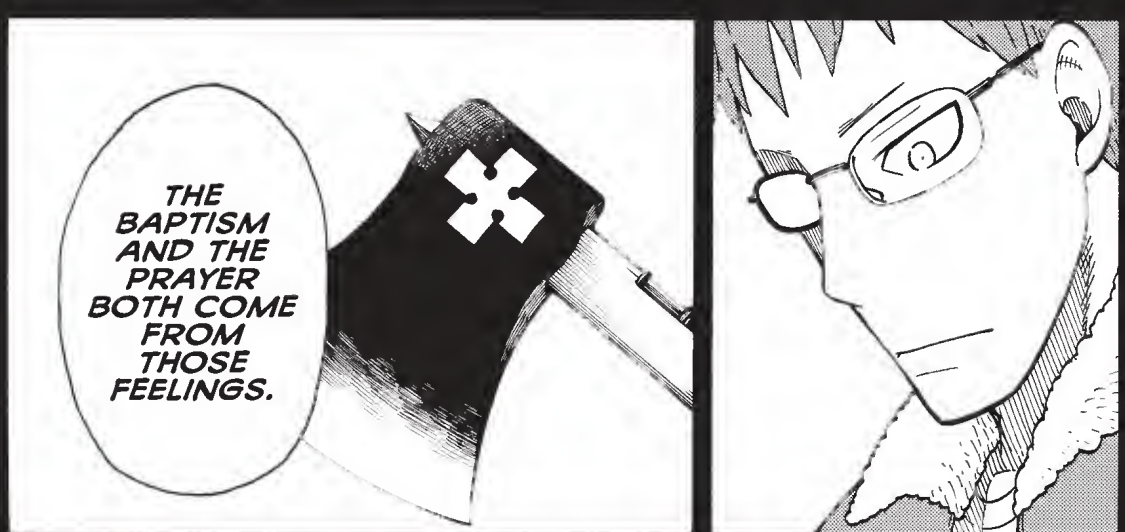
RIP
NO PUNISH-MENT COULD BE NEARLY AS BAD AS WHAT THE INFERNAL IN THIS BUILD-ING IS GOING THROUGH.
TOKYO
ARMY
!
ISN'T THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE?
...


THE INFERNAL SHOULD BE UP-STAIRS.
SERGEANT HINAWA... DO YOU HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE FIGHTING INFERNALS?
MY FRIEND WENT INFERNAL JUST THE OTHER DAY. I POINTED A GUN AT HIM, BUT...

...I COULDN'T SHOOT HIM.
...
I DON'T HAVE A WHOLE LOT OF FAITH IN THE HOLY SOL TEMPLE...BUT I COULDN'T SHOOT HIM WITH A GUN THAT HADN'T BEEN BAPTIZED.
CHAK
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

WHOOOOSH
INFERNAL CONFIRMED...

SERGEANT HINAWA...I DON'T THINK IT'S ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT YOU BELIEVE IN GOD.
IT'S ABOUT WANTING TO DO WHAT YOU CAN FOR THE INFERNALS AS THEY GO TO THEIR ETERNAL REST.


THE BAPTISM AND THE PRAYER BOTH COME FROM THOSE FEELINGS.

AND THOSE BAPTISMS AND PRAYERS ARE A TYPE OF SALVATION FOR THOSE WHO TAKE THOSE INFERNALS' LIVES.
I'LL DO IT.
ZSH
SFF
YES, SIR.
TOKYO
ARMY
YOU KNOW THE WORDS OF THE PRAYER?
WGAAA

ASHES AS ASHES.
MAY THY SOUL...
THE FLAME IS THE SOUL'S BREATH...
THE BLACK SMOKE IS THE SOUL'S RELEASE...
!
...YOU'RE A NICE GUY, SERGEANT HINAWA.
YOU'RE
NOT AS HEARTLESS AS YOU THINK YOU ARE.
HINAWA... YOU...

SWOO
CHAK
BANG
売地

...
志地
禁止
YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN.
IT'S NOT A PROB-LEM.
WE BROKE THE LAW. YOU'RE GONNA GET MORE THAN A SLAP ON THE WRIST FOR THIS. ARE YOU REALLY OKAY WITH THAT?
I ONLY WANTED TO FIGHT FOR YOUR BRAND OF JUSTICE.
*YOU'RE* THE BRAVE ONE. IF YOU HADN'T TAKEN ACTION, I DOUBT I WOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING.

YOU'RE THE HERO TODAY... SERGEANT HINAWA.
PAT
...
BUT TRUSTING SOMEONE ELSE, AND ACTING ON THAT TRUST DESPITE THE PERSONAL COST-THAT TAKES A CRAZY AMOUNT OF COURAGE.
IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS AND ACT ON THEM. IT'S EASY TO TRUST YOURSELF.
EVEN A RECKLESS IDIOT LIKE ME CAN DO THAT.
THEN THAT WOULD MAKE YOU THE KING.
AFTER TODAY, MY MIND'S MADE UP. I DON'T KNOW WHEN IT WILL HAPPEN-THAT DEPENDS ON MY PUNISHMENT.
?
...

BUT I'M GOING TO FORM MY OWN COMPANY IN THE SPECIAL FIRE FORCE.
TOKYO
ARMY

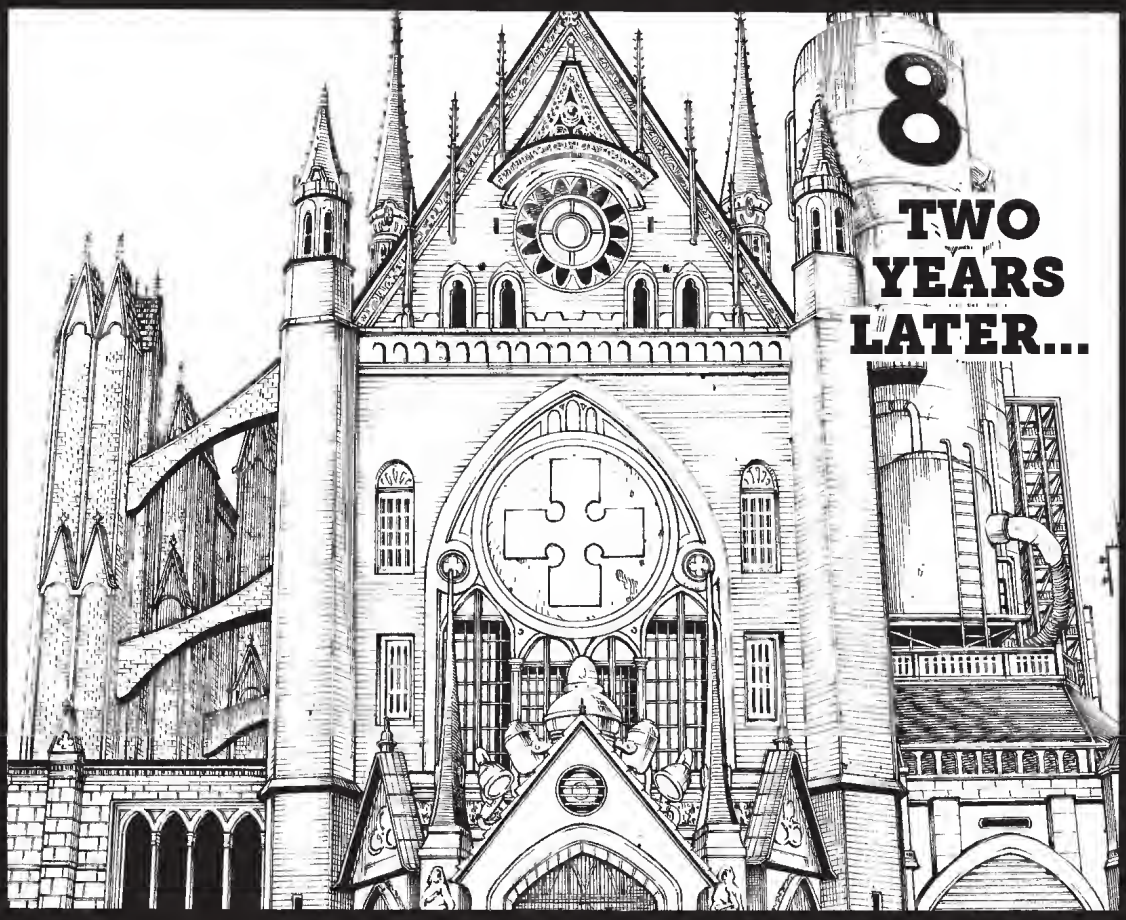
FIRE FORCE

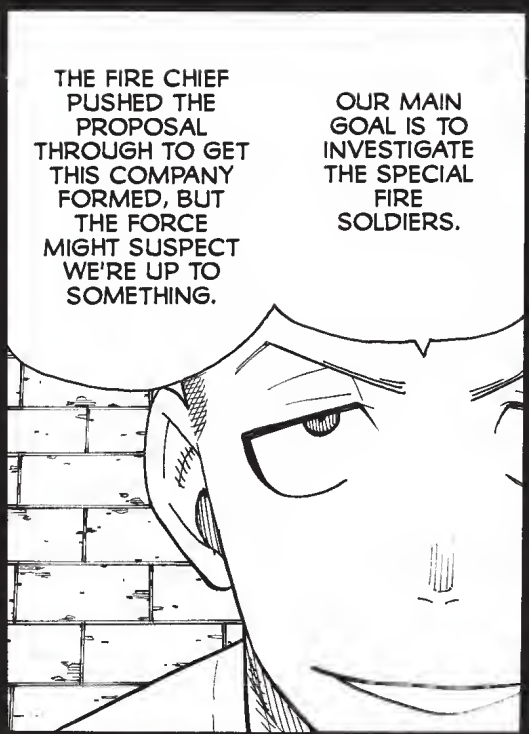
FIRE
FORCE

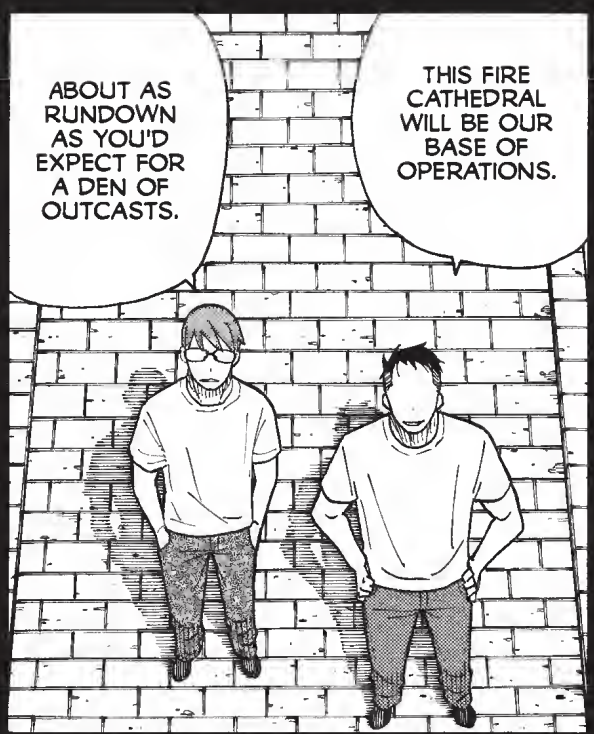
# CHAPTER XXXVIII: THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE WHITE-CLAD

I WANT TO BE A SPECIAL FIRE SOLDIER. I WANT TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE INFERNALS.
THERE ARE TOO MANY THINGS I CAN'T DO AS A FIREFIGHTER.
I CAN'T JUST STAND AROUND AND DO NOTHING IN THIS BURNT, BLACKENED WORLD.
...

AND I'LL NEED SOLDIERS LIKE YOU,
WHO CAN VALUE LIFE ABOVE ALL ELSE IN THIS HELL.
WHEN THE TIME COMES, I'LL BE WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU.

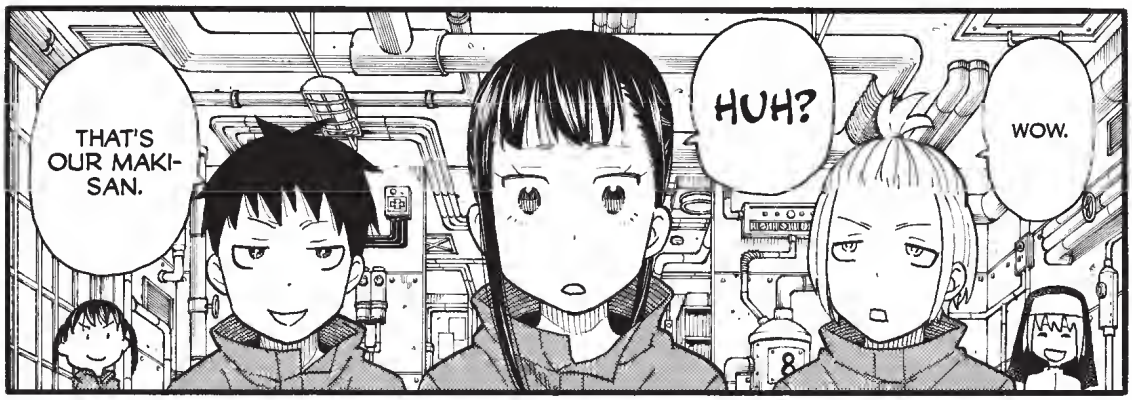

8
TWO YEARS LATER...

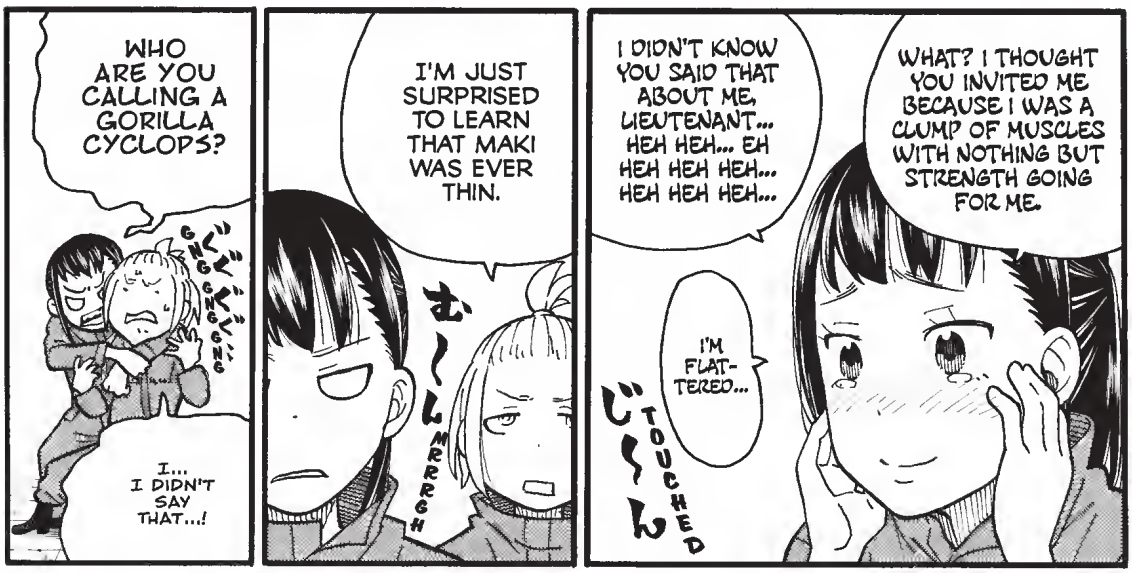

THE FIRE CHIEF PUSHED THE PROPOSAL THROUGH TO GET THIS COMPANY FORMED, BUT THE FORCE MIGHT SUSPECT WE'RE UP TO SOMETHING.
OUR MAIN GOAL IS TO INVESTIGATE THE SPECIAL FIRE SOLDIERS.

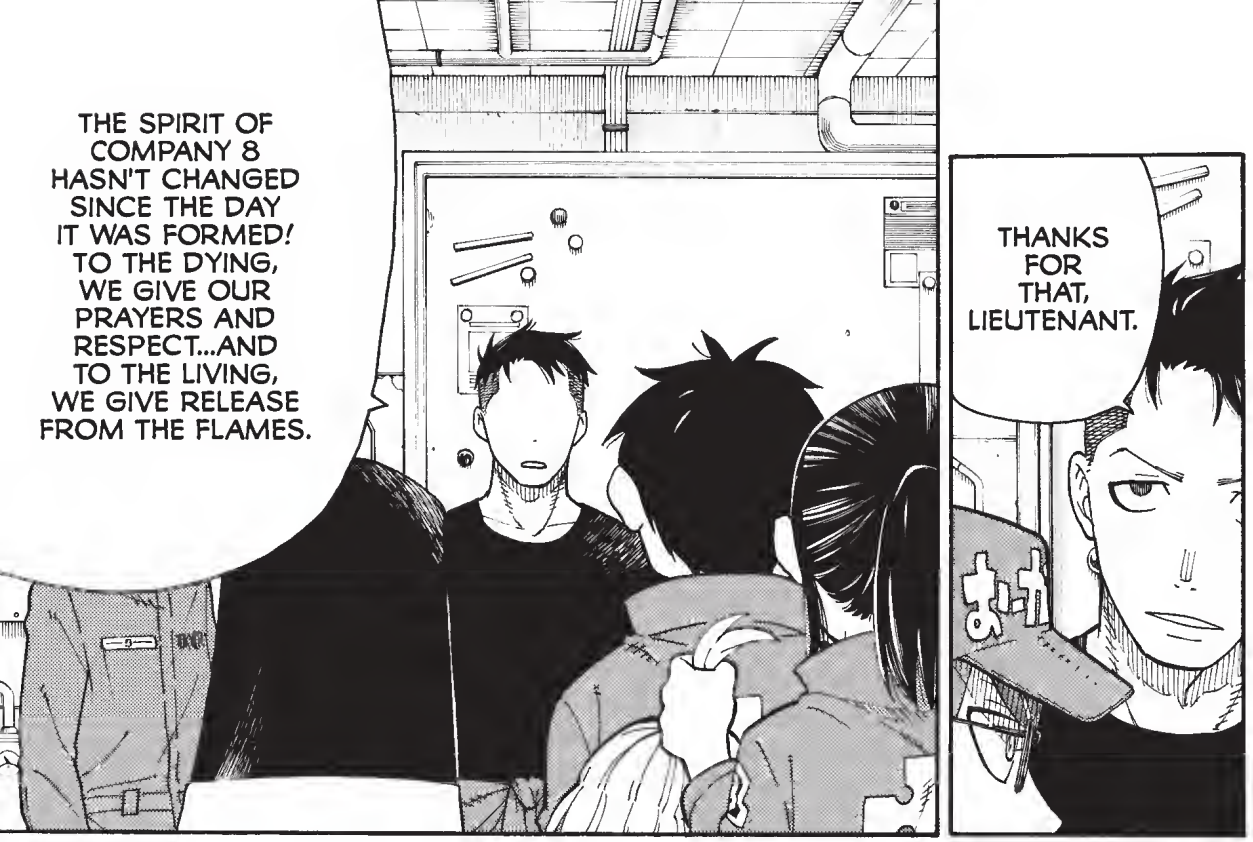

ABOUT AS RUNDOWN AS YOU'D EXPECT FOR A DEN OF OUTCASTS.
THIS FIRE CATHEDRAL WILL BE OUR BASE OF OPERATIONS.

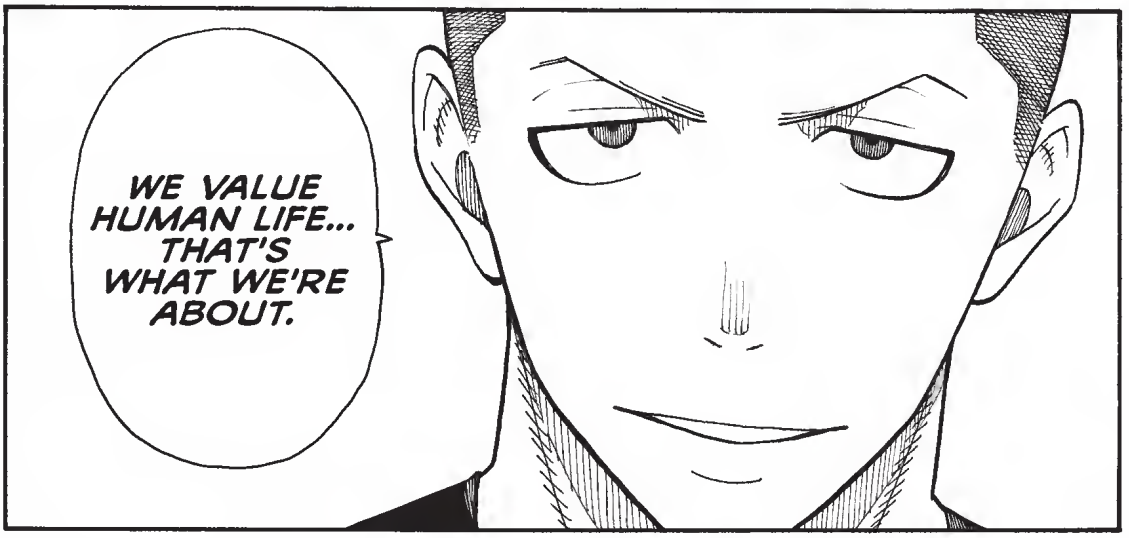
THIS IS GOING TO WORK, ISN'T IT? OR IS IT A NEW TYPE OF SCAM?
AFTER ALL THAT SHAMELESS SCOUTING YOU DID, CLAIMING WE COULD GET HIGHER PAY...
THIS IS FAR FROM THE "GREAT COMPANY" SOMEONE LED ME TO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE.
ARE WE THE ONLY TWO MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY?
WELL?
UH... NO...
NAG
NAG
NAG
NAG
NAG
UH-HUH...
IT'S JUST NOT THAT EASY TO FIND SOLDIERS I CAN TRUST...
I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT HAPPEN. ...AS A MATTER OF FACT, I HAVE THOUGHT OF ONE PROSPECTIVE RECRUIT.
SHE WAS MY JUNIOR IN THE MILITARY. SHE WORKS HARDER THAN ANYBODY, BUT SHE'S USELESS AS MILITARY PERSONNEL.
BUT NEVER MIND THAT- YOU GREW YOUR HAIR OUT...
POKE

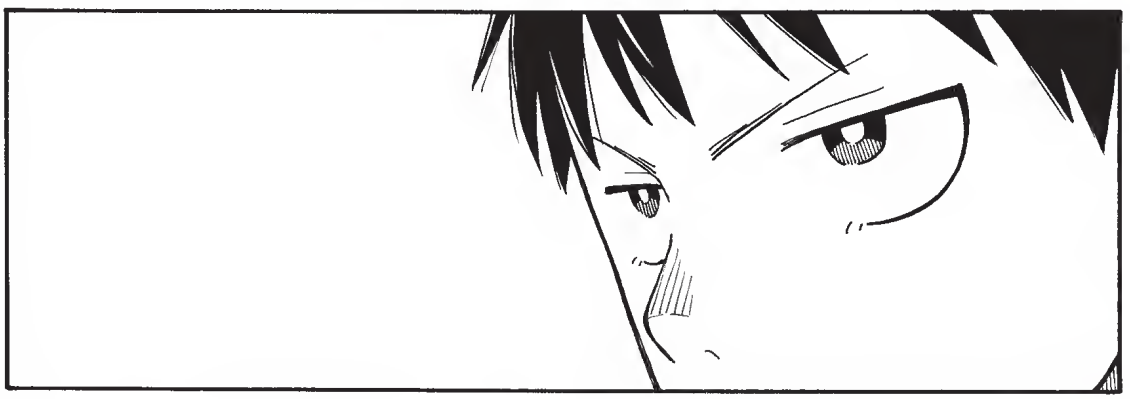
SHE'S THE NICEST PERSON I KNOW, AND ALWAYS PUTS OTHERS FIRST. I THINK SHE'D FIT RIGHT IN TO YOUR COMPANY 8.


THAT'S OUR MAKI-SAN.
HUH?
WOW.

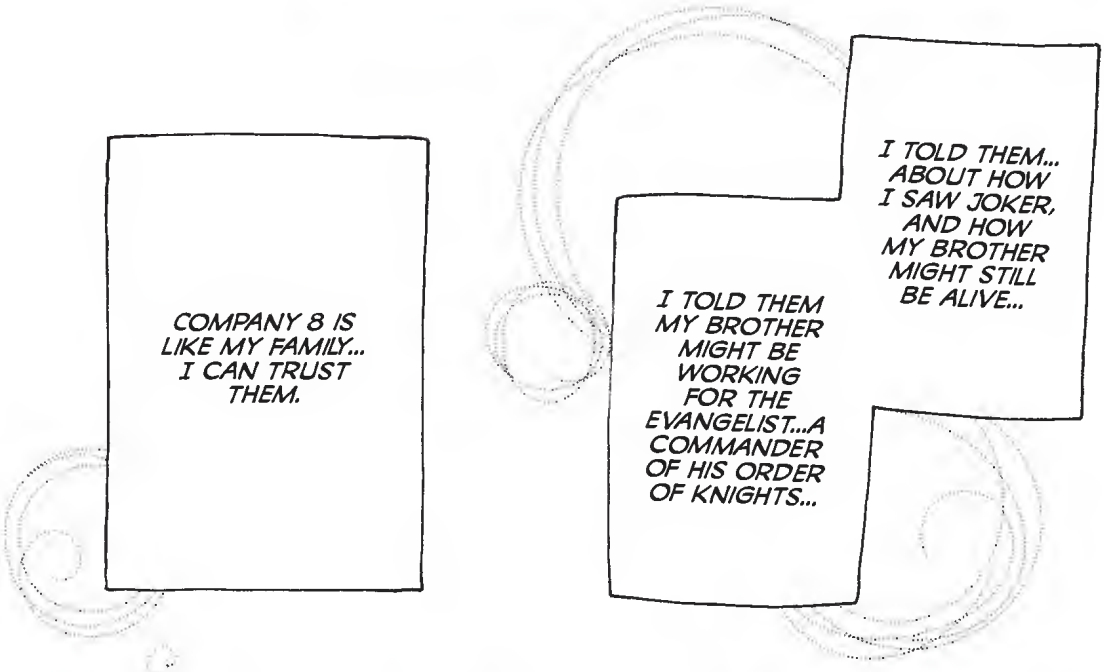

WHO ARE YOU CALLING A GORILLA CYCLOPS?
GNG GNG GNG GNG
I... I DIDN'T SAY THAT...!
I'M JUST SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT MAKI WAS EVER THIN.
むーん MRRRGH
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU SAID THAT ABOUT ME, LIEUTENANT... HEH HEH... EH HEH HEH HEH... HEH HEH HEH...
I'M FLAT-TERED...
じーん TOUCHED
WHAT? I THOUGHT YOU INVITED ME BECAUSE I WAS A CLUMP OF MUSCLES WITH NOTHING BUT STRENGTH GOING FOR ME.

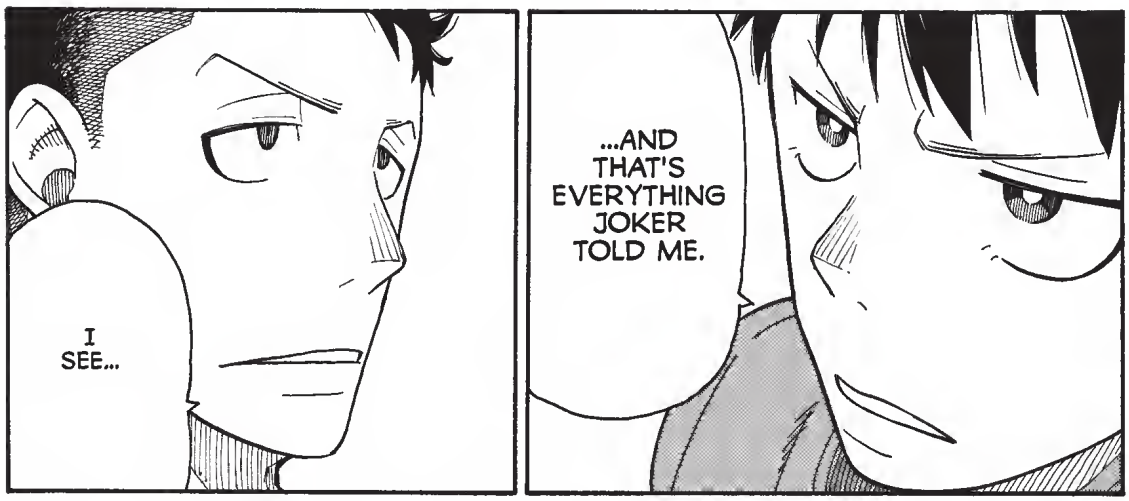

THE SPIRIT OF COMPANY 8 HASN'T CHANGED SINCE THE DAY IT WAS FORMED! TO THE DYING, WE GIVE OUR PRAYERS AND RESPECT...AND TO THE LIVING, WE GIVE RELEASE FROM THE FLAMES.
THANKS FOR THAT, LIEUTENANT.


WE VALUE HUMAN LIFE... THAT'S WHAT WE'RE ABOUT.

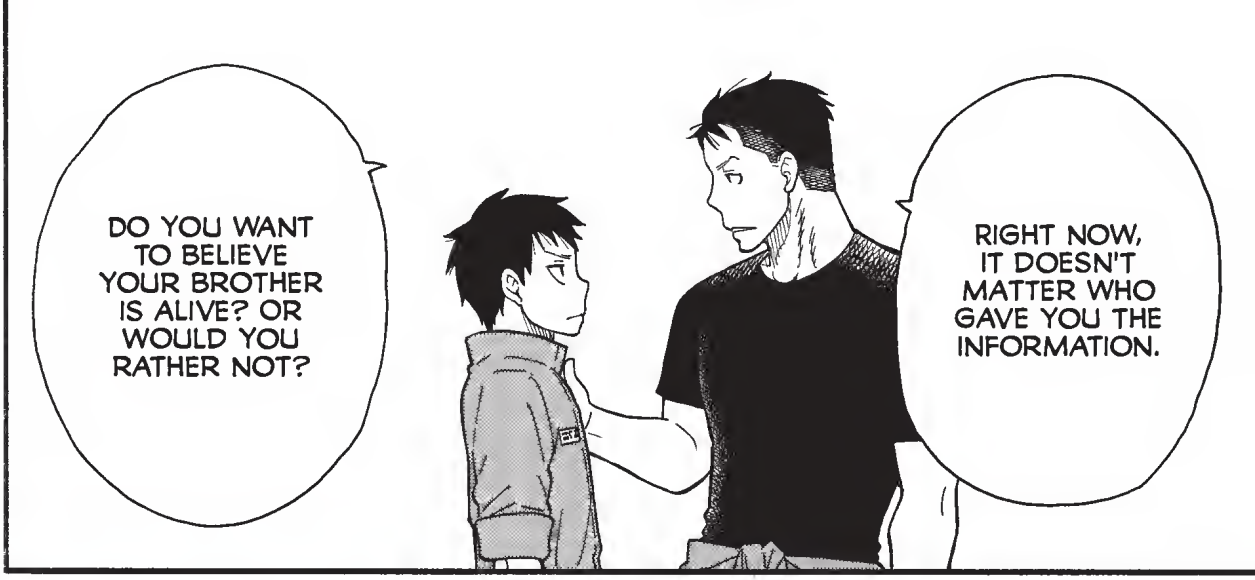


THE THING IS...
!
...BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME...

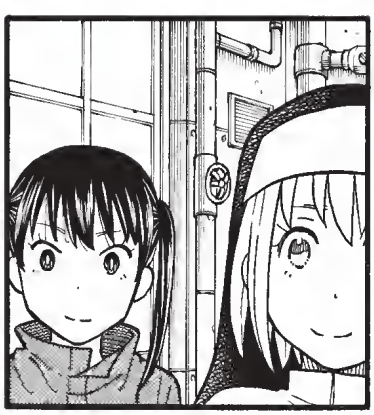

COMPANY 8 IS LIKE MY FAMILY... I CAN TRUST THEM.
I TOLD THEM MY BROTHER MIGHT BE WORKING FOR THE EVANGELIST...A COMMANDER OF HIS ORDER OF KNIGHTS...
I TOLD THEM... ABOUT HOW I SAW JOKER, AND HOW MY BROTHER MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE...

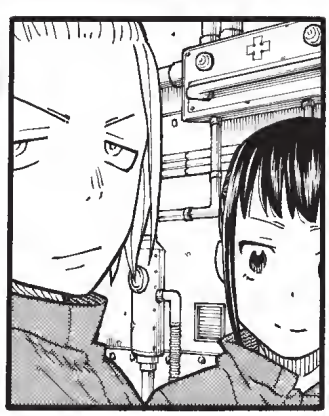

I SEE...
...AND THAT'S EVERYTHING JOKER TOLD ME.

JOKER'S THE GUY WHO CRASHED THE ROOKIE GAMES AND PUT ALL THOSE FIRE SOLDIERS IN DANGER.
MAYBE HE'S JUST TRYING TO CONFUSE YOU AGAIN, BY GIVING YOU WEIRD INFORMATION.
BUT YOU HEARD THIS ALL FROM JOKER. CAN YOU TRUST IT?
WELL THEN, YOU...
I WAS TOLD THAT MY BROTHER DIED IN THE FIRE 12 YEARS AGO... THAT NOT EVEN HIS BONES WERE LEFT.
AFTER ALL THIS TIME, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, EITHER.
!!
SHINRA.


DO YOU WANT TO BELIEVE YOUR BROTHER IS ALIVE? OR WOULD YOU RATHER NOT?
RIGHT NOW, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO GAVE YOU THE INFORMATION.

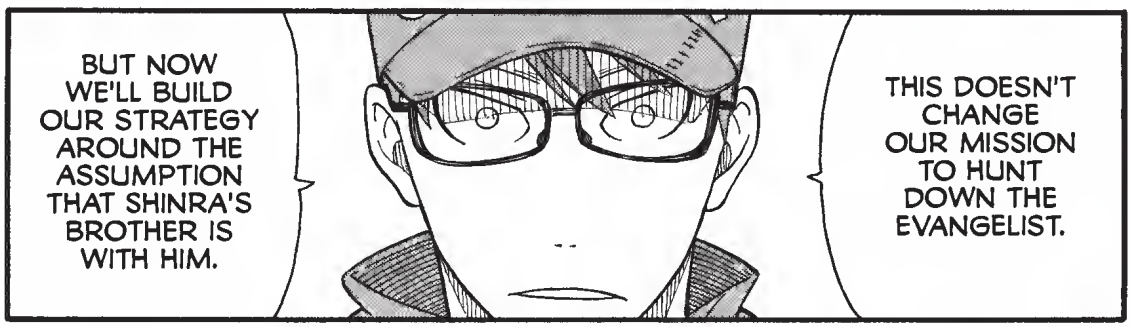
I WANT TO BELIEVE IT, SIR!!

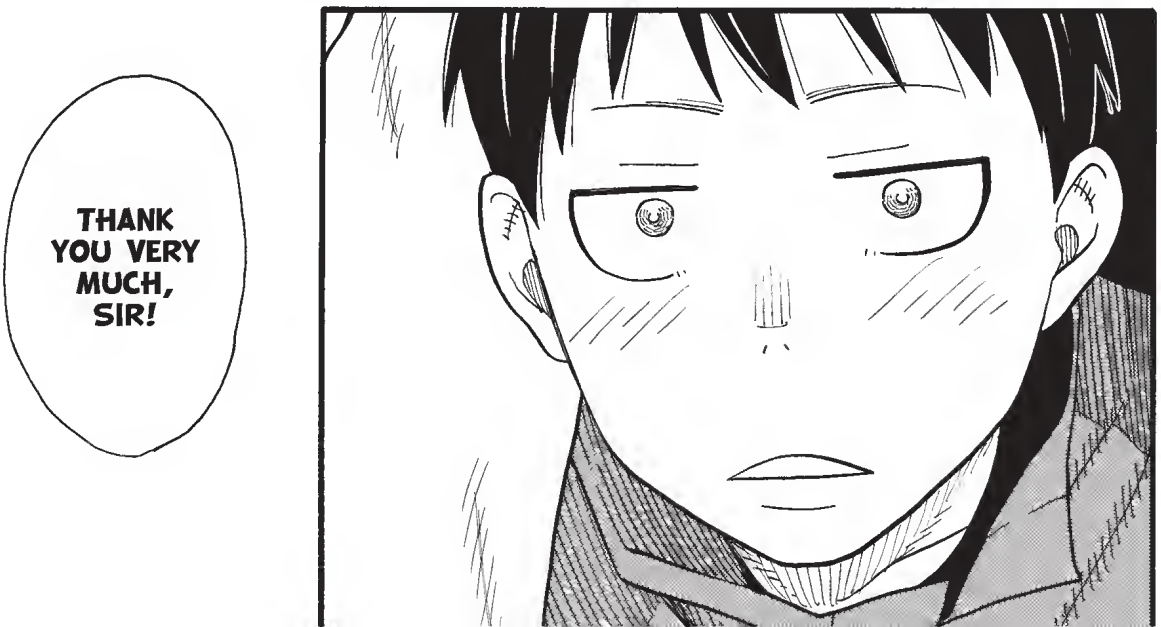


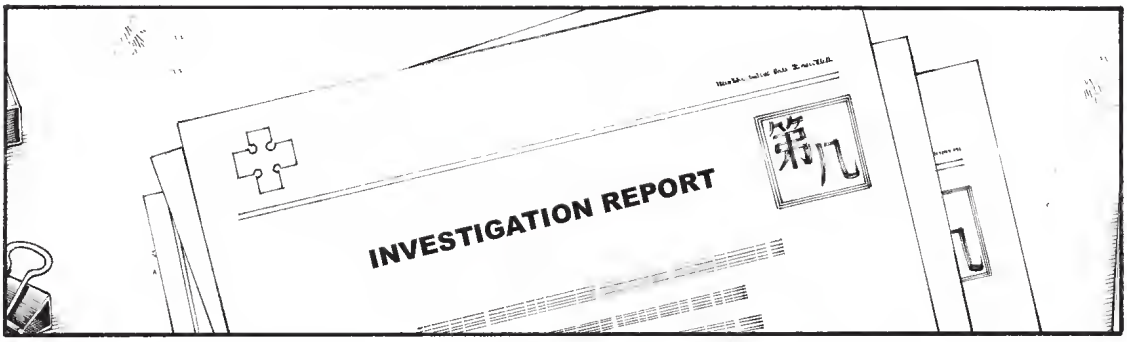


THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
ポス
POFF

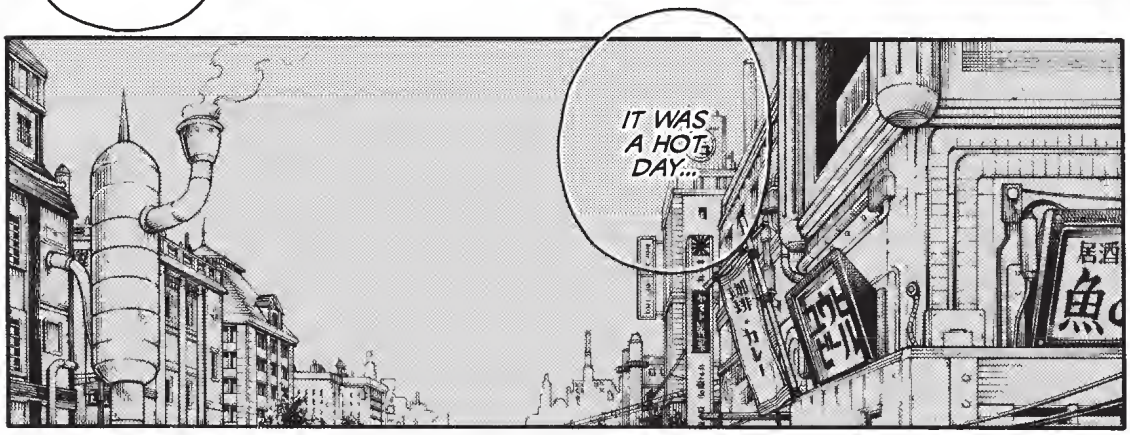
AND IN THAT CASE, WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE TO BELIEVE IT, TOO.

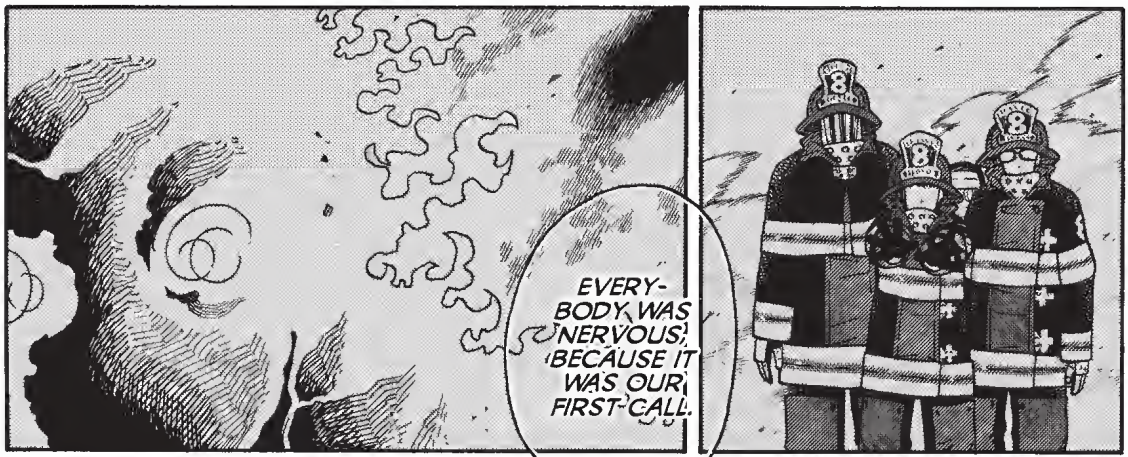

BUT NOW WE'LL BUILD OUR STRATEGY AROUND THE ASSUMPTION THAT SHINRA'S BROTHER IS WITH HIM.
THIS DOESN'T CHANGE OUR MISSION TO HUNT DOWN THE EVANGELIST.

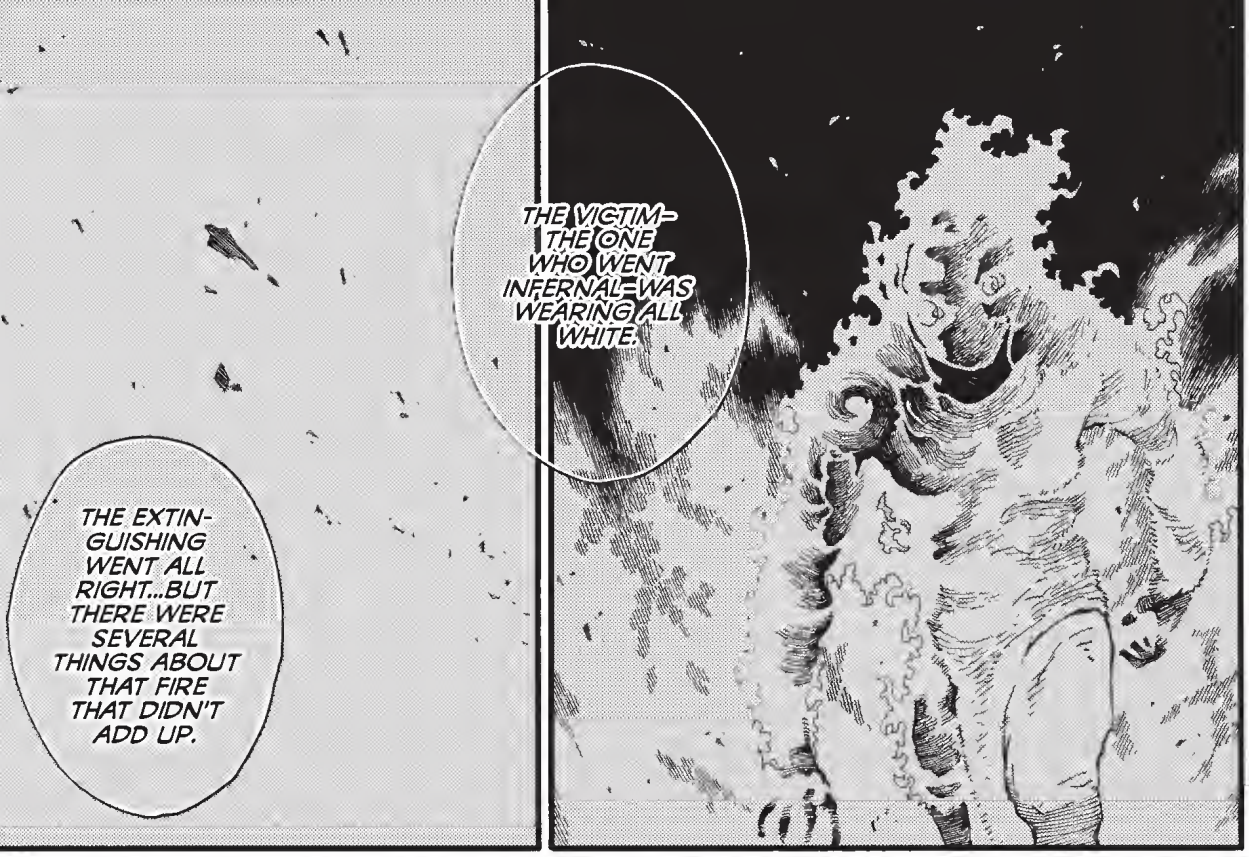

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR!

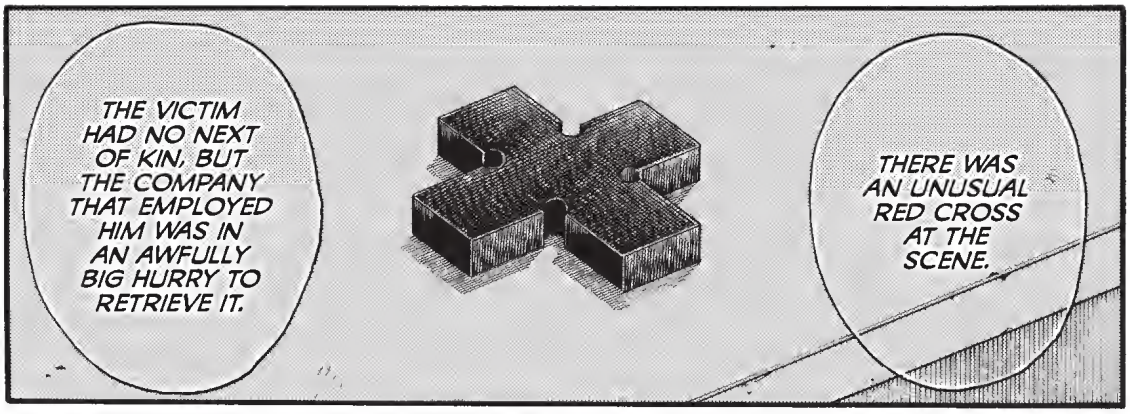

INVESTIGATION REPORT
第八

I MEANT TO GET TO THIS SOONER, BUT...
THIS INVESTIGATION REPORT IS FROM SOON AFTER SISTER IRIS AND MAKI JOINED US.
...DO YOU ALL REMEMBER?


IT WAS A HOT DAY...


EVERYBODY WAS NERVOUS, BECAUSE IT WAS OUR FIRST CALL.

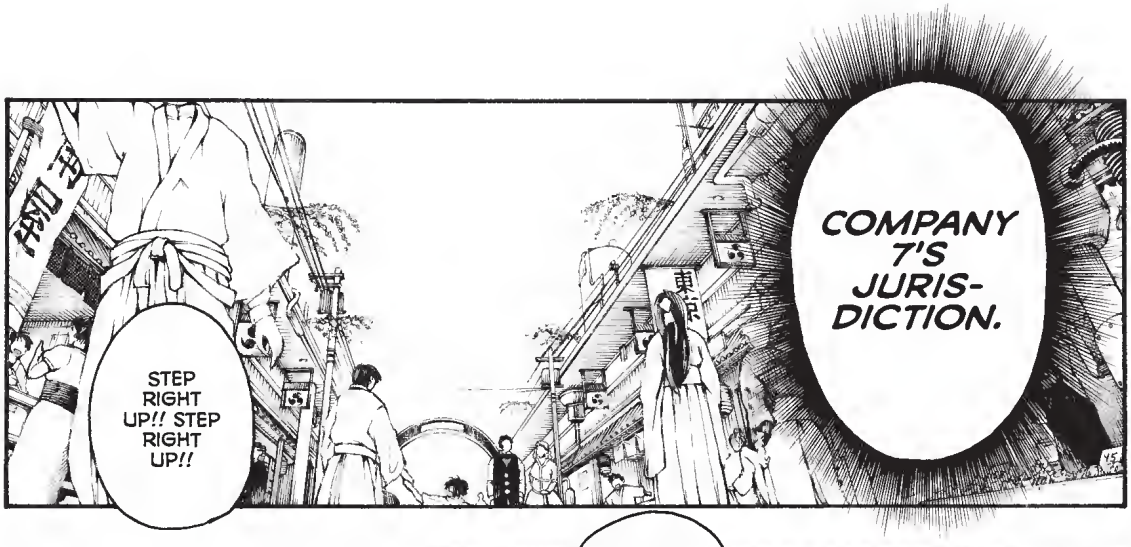

THE VICTIM—THE ONE WHO WENT INFERNAL—WAS WEARING ALL WHITE.
THE EXTINGUISHING WENT ALL RIGHT...BUT THERE WERE SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT THAT FIRE THAT DIDN'T ADD UP.

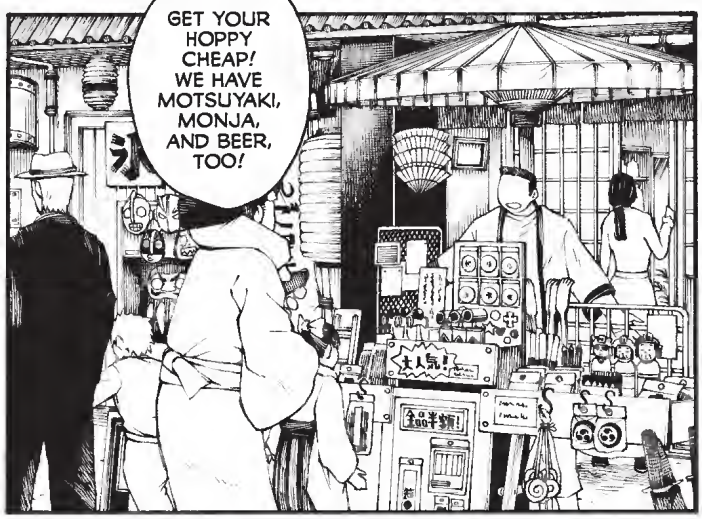

THE VICTIM HAD NO NEXT OF KIN, BUT THE COMPANY THAT EMPLOYED HIM WAS IN AN AWFULLY BIG HURRY TO RETRIEVE IT.
THERE WAS AN UNUSUAL RED CROSS AT THE SCENE.

AFTER SOME DIGGING, WE FOUND OUT THAT THE COMPANY IS STILL IN BUSINESS.
WE CAN FIND IT IN ASAKUSA.

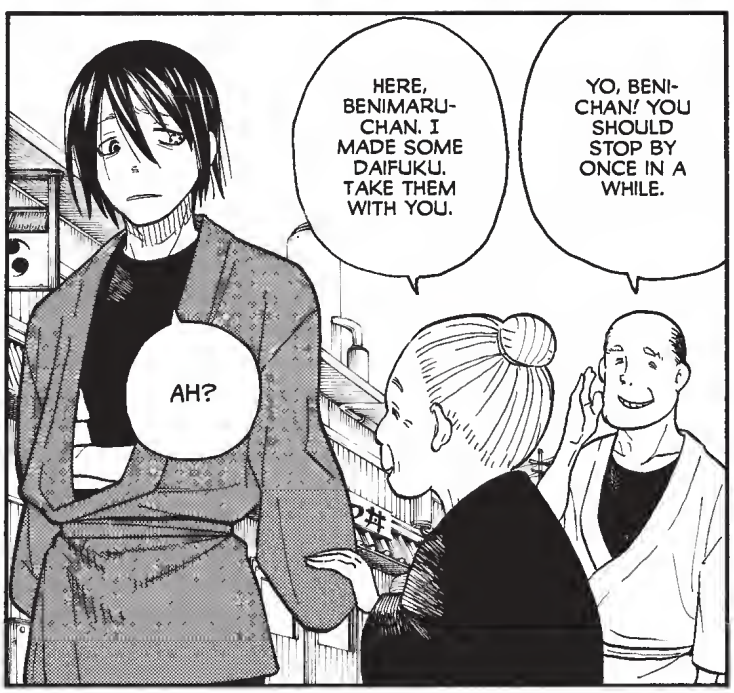
# ASAKUSA

Sign: Kinryūzan　　Lamp: Kaminarimon

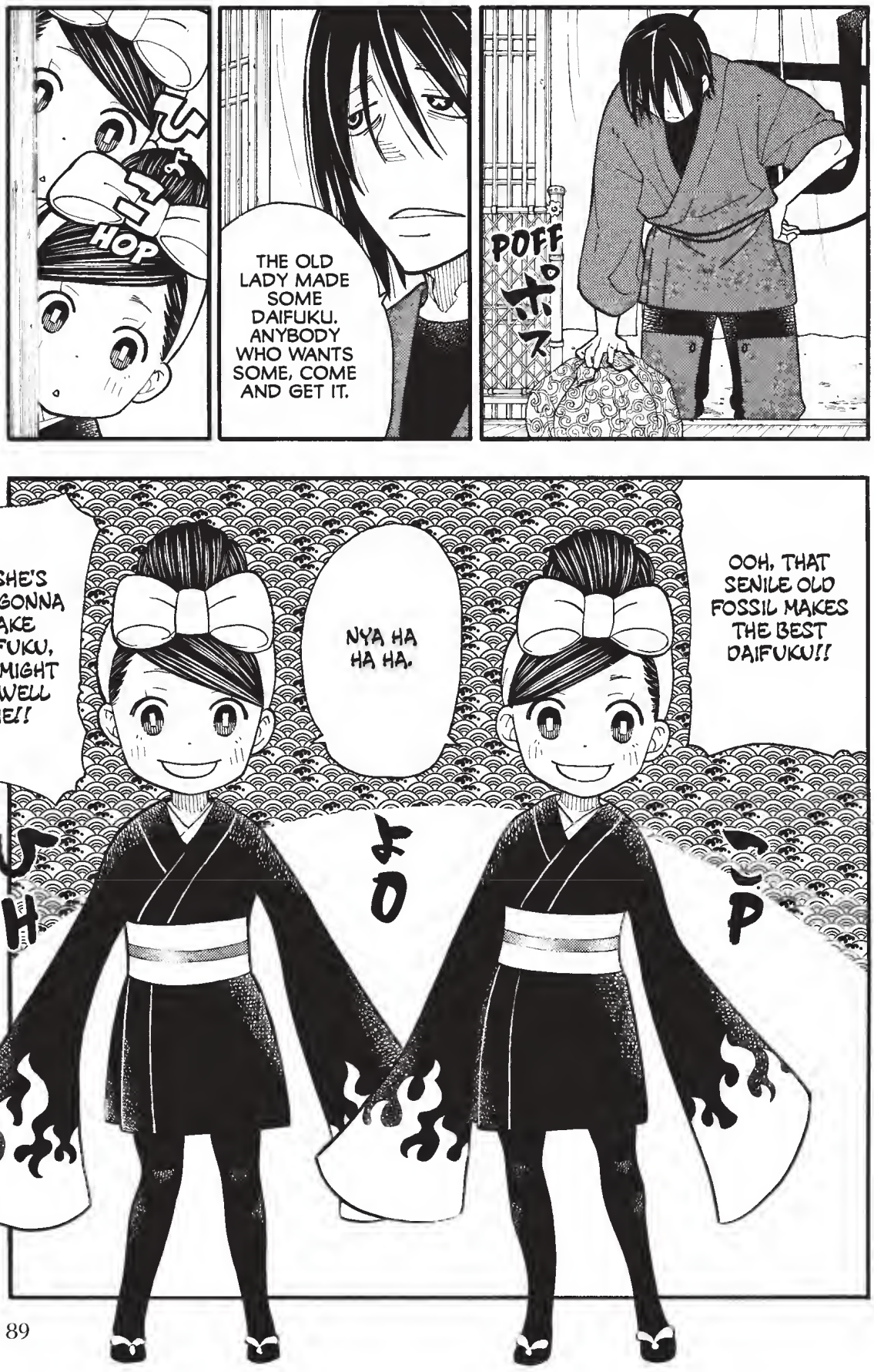

COMPANY 7'S JURIS-DICTION.
STEP RIGHT UP!! STEP RIGHT UP!!

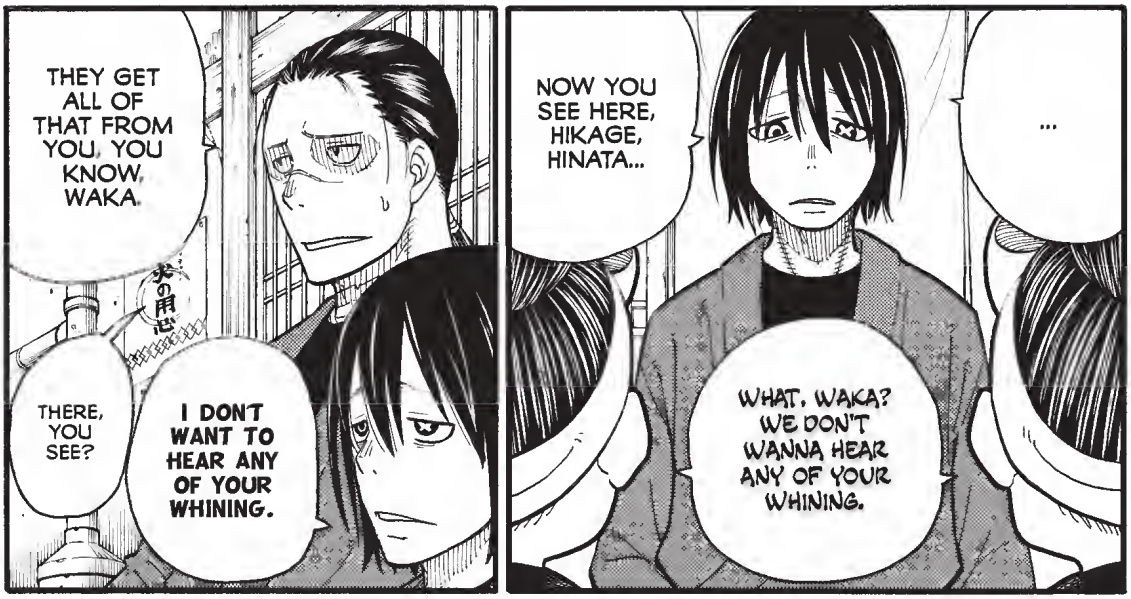

GET YOUR HOPPY CHEAP! WE HAVE MOTSUYAKI, MONJA, AND BEER, TOO!

I'M ALWAYS TELLING YOU, YOU OLD BAT–I DON'T WANT YOUR SWEETS.

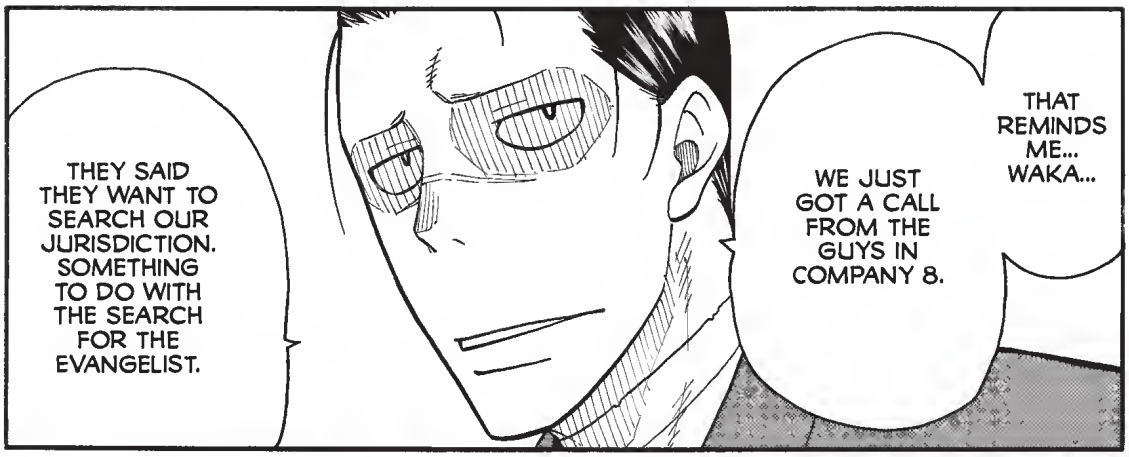

AH?
HERE, BENIMARU-CHAN. I MADE SOME DAIFUKU. TAKE THEM WITH YOU.
YO, BENI-CHAN! YOU SHOULD STOP BY ONCE IN A WHILE.

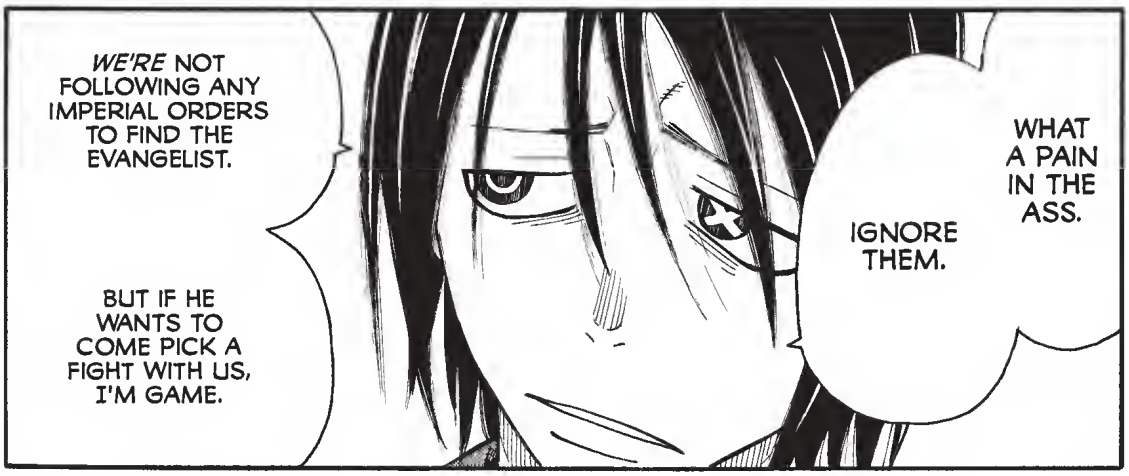
WA HA HA!
わーはっは
YO, BENI-CHAN!! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN THREE DAYS! HOW'VE YA BEEN?!
WHY WON'T ANY OF THESE PEOPLE LEAVE ME ALONE?
DRINKIN'S NO FUN WITHOUT YOU!! I EXPECT TO SEE YOU TONIGHT!!
GLOOM
ずーん
DID SHE HAVE TO MAKE SO MANY?
...
SPECIAL FIRE GUARDHOUSE 7
第七火消番
松乃湯

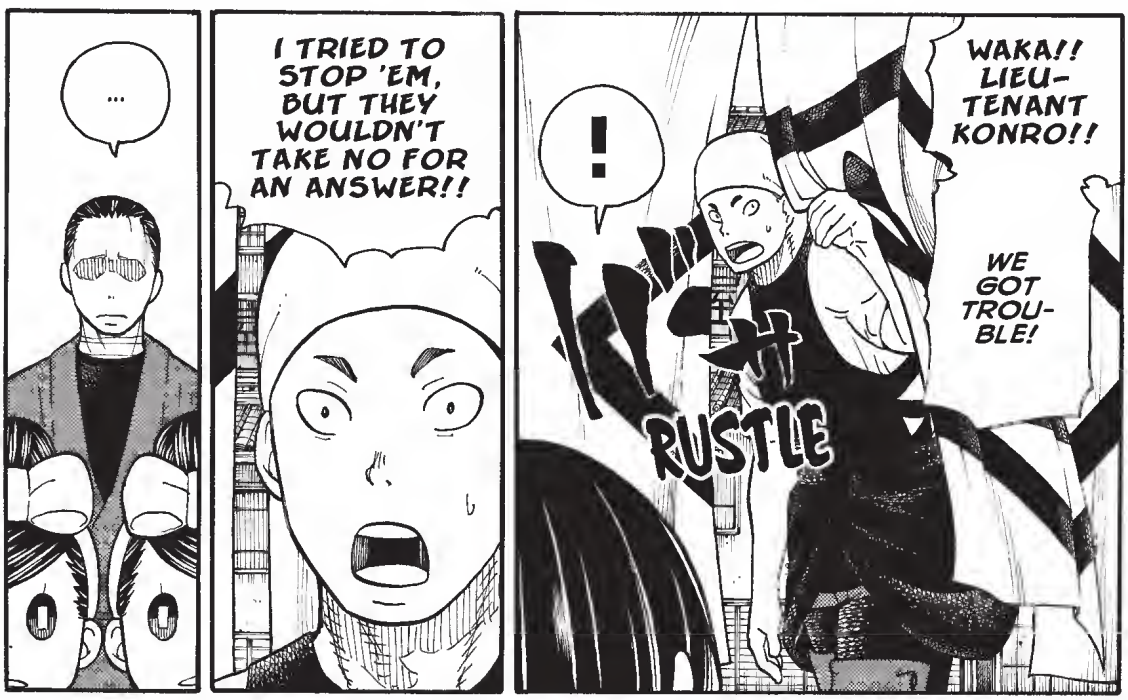

HOP
THE OLD LADY MADE SOME DAIFUKU. ANYBODY WHO WANTS SOME, COME AND GET IT.
POFF
ポス
IF SHE'S NOT GONNA MAKE DAIFUKU, SHE MIGHT AS WELL DIE!!
NYA HA HA HA.
OOH, THAT SENILE OLD FOSSIL MAKES THE BEST DAIFUKU!!


THEY GET ALL OF THAT FROM YOU, YOU KNOW, WAKA.
火の用心
THERE, YOU SEE?
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY OF YOUR WHINING.
NOW YOU SEE HERE, HIKAGE, HINATA...
...
WHAT, WAKA? WE DON'T WANNA HEAR ANY OF YOUR WHINING.

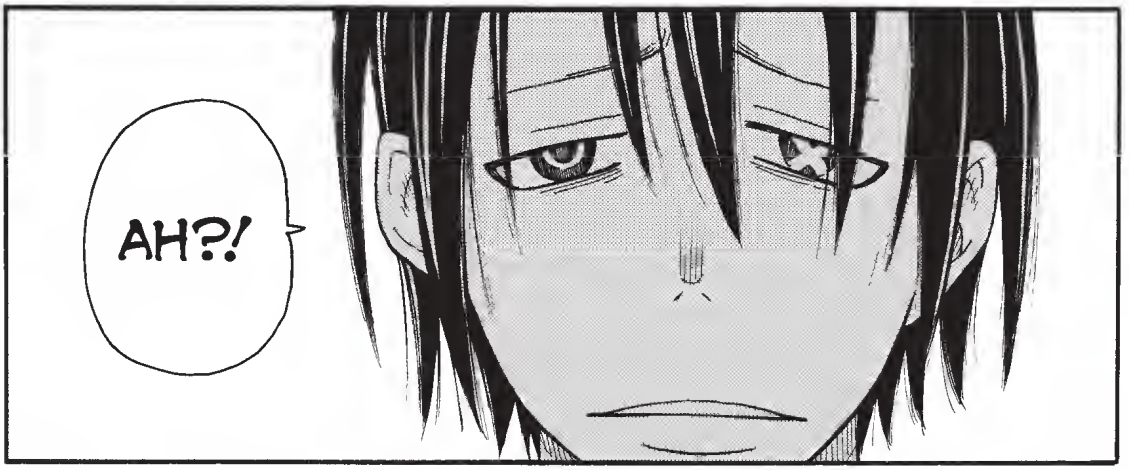
...
I'M NOT *THAT* BAD.
NYA HA HA HA! THE OLD BAT'S SWAN SONG IS FREAKING DELICIOUS!! ♪
THIS DAIFUKU IS AWESOME! THE OLD FOSSIL'S LAST HURRAH.
もぐもぐ
MUNCHIN' MOCHI
もぐもぐ
MUNCHIN' MOCHI


THEY SAID THEY WANT TO SEARCH OUR JURISDICTION. SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE SEARCH FOR THE EVANGELIST.
WE JUST GOT A CALL FROM THE GUYS IN COMPANY 8.
THAT REMINDS ME... WAKA...


*WE'RE* NOT FOLLOWING ANY IMPERIAL ORDERS TO FIND THE EVANGELIST.
BUT IF HE WANTS TO COME PICK A FIGHT WITH US, I'M GAME.
IGNORE THEM.
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS.


...
I TRIED TO STOP 'EM, BUT THEY WOULDN'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER!!
!
RUSTLE
WAKA!! LIEU-TENANT KONRO!!
WE GOT TROU-BLE!

EXCUSE US... WE'RE COMPANY 8. WE CALLED EARLIER.
SORRY, BUT WE'RE HERE.


AH?!

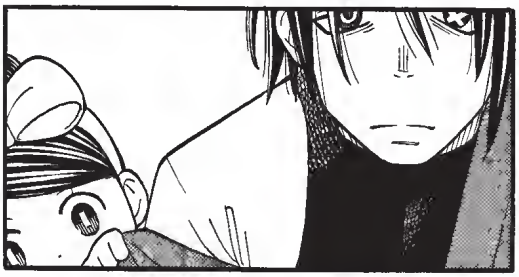
FIRE FORCE

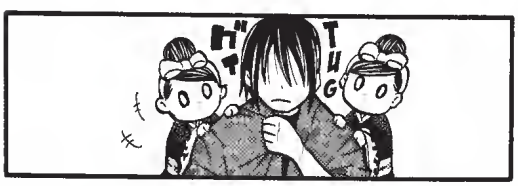
FIRE
FORCE

# CHAPTER XXXIX: THE GREATEST HIKESHI

GET OUTTA HERE, ALL OF YA!!

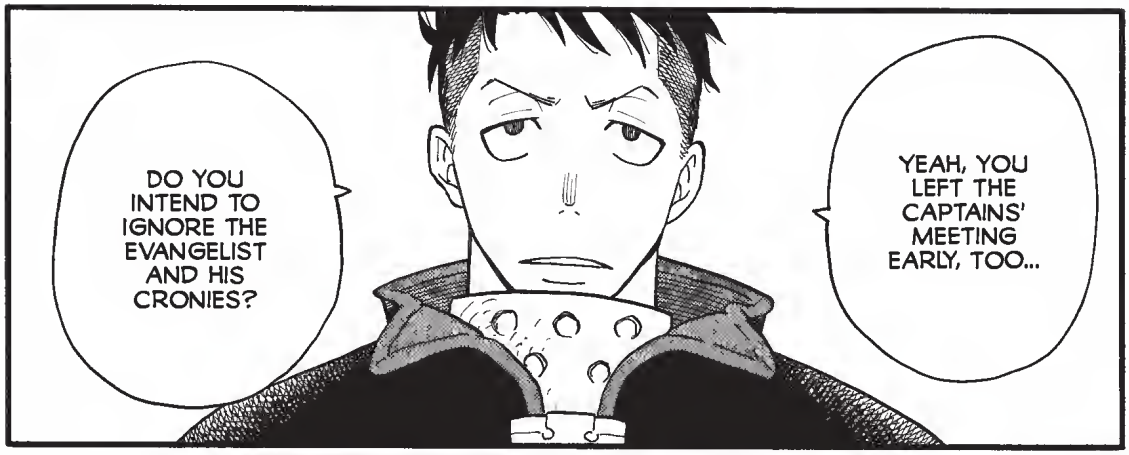
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, DROPPING IN ON US UNANNOUNCED?

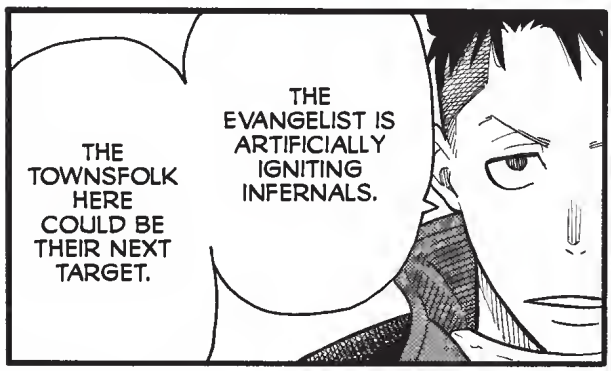



TUG

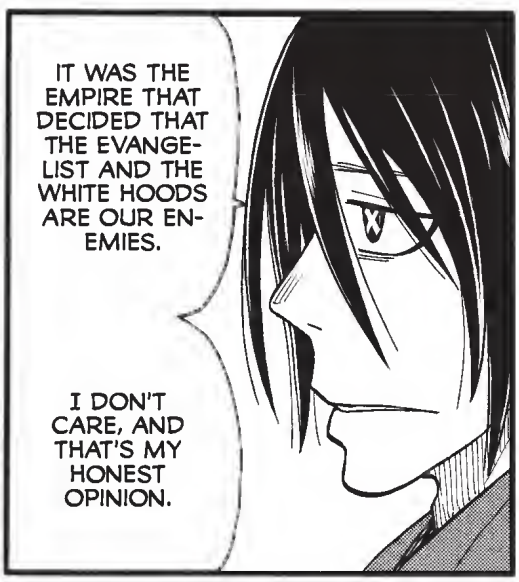
WOULD YOU RATHER WE FOLLOWED FIRE FORCE PROTOCOL AND MADE AN APPOINTMENT?
I DECIDED TO JUST HEAD OVER, BECAUSE I'D HEARD THAT CAPTAIN SHINMON BENIMARU HATES RED TAPE.

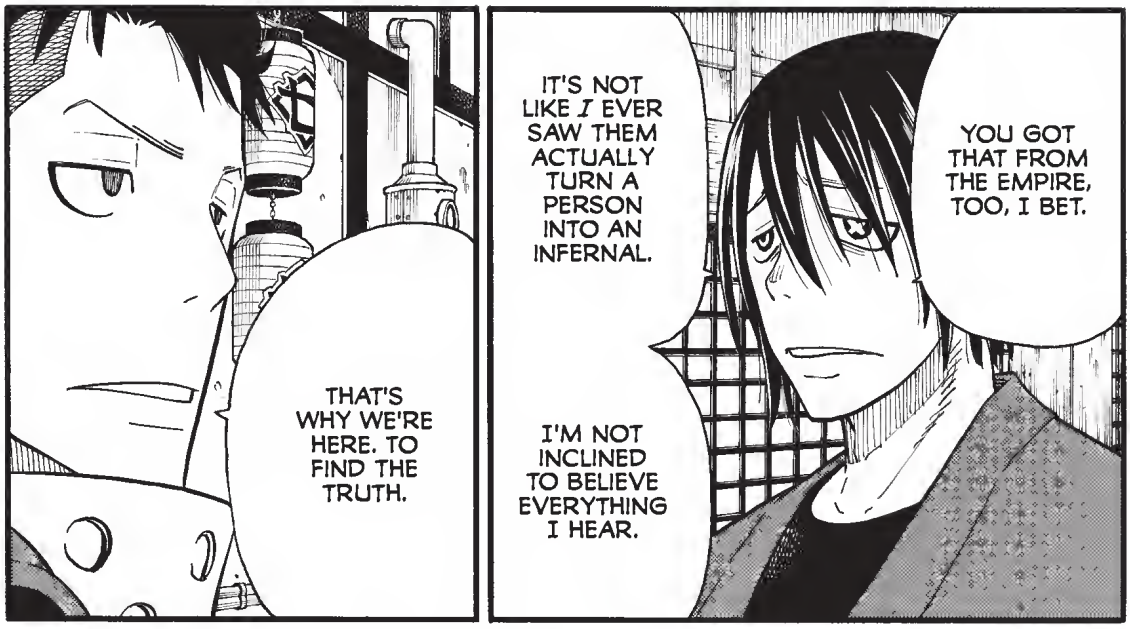
COMPANY 7 HAS ITS OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS.
I CAN'T LET YOU COME IN HERE AND MESS UP OUR TURF.
FINE, YOU'RE HERE. WHATEVER. BUT I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE INVESTIGATING THE EVANGELIST.

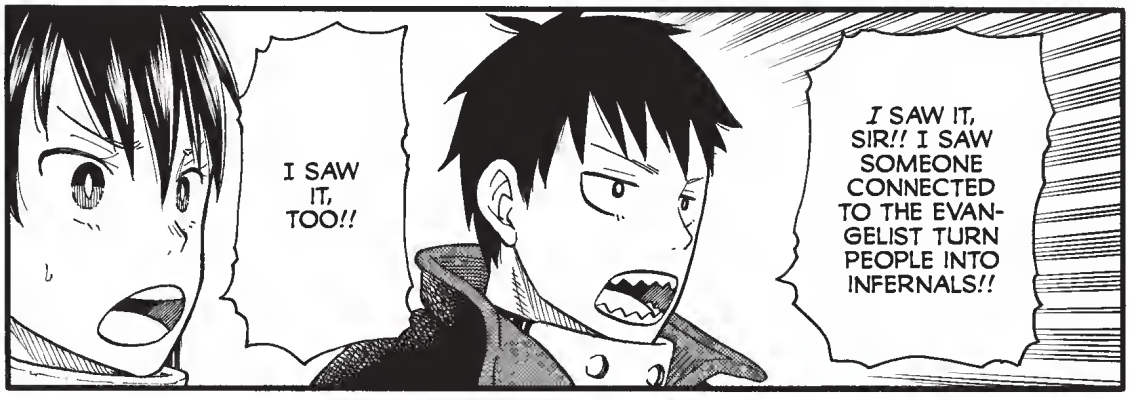

DO YOU INTEND TO IGNORE THE EVANGELIST AND HIS CRONIES?
YEAH, YOU LEFT THE CAPTAINS' MEETING EARLY, TOO...


THE TOWNSFOLK HERE COULD BE THEIR NEXT TARGET.
THE EVANGELIST IS ARTIFICIALLY IGNITING INFERNALS.

...


IT WAS THE EMPIRE THAT DECIDED THAT THE EVANGELIST AND THE WHITE HOODS ARE OUR ENEMIES.
I DON'T CARE, AND THAT'S MY HONEST OPINION.


THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. TO FIND THE TRUTH.
IT'S NOT LIKE I EVER SAW THEM ACTUALLY TURN A PERSON INTO AN INFERNAL.
I'M NOT INCLINED TO BELIEVE EVERYTHING I HEAR.
YOU GOT THAT FROM THE EMPIRE, TOO, I BET.


I SAW IT, TOO!!
I SAW IT, SIR!! I SAW SOMEONE CONNECTED TO THE EVANGELIST TURN PEOPLE INTO INFERNALS!!

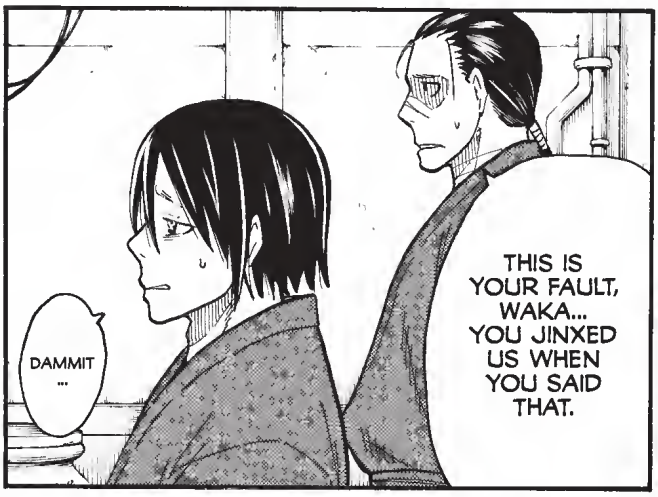
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THE WORD OF A MUTT WHO DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS.
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN WHAT SOME DOGS OF THE EMPIRE SAW.

I DON'T NEED TO TAKE THAT FROM A GUY...
...WHO SITS AROUND DOING NOTHING BUT ASKING QUESTIONS.

ZWEE
YOU GOT GUTS, YOU LITTLE PUNK.
THEY'RE BRINGING 'EM UP RIGHT IN COMPANY 8.
SHINRA! WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO FIGHT THEM.
BUT THEY'RE FIGHTING US!! LISTEN TO THEM!!

FIRES AND STREET FIGHTS ARE THE FLOWERS OF EDO, EH?
YOU'RE SO TOUGH, THE EMPIRE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RECOGNIZE YOUR TOWN'S FIRE BRIGADE AS PART OF THE SPECIAL FIRE FORCE!
SO NOW IT'S MY TURN! I'M GONNA BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF YOU AND MAKE YOU SEE THINGS MY WAY!!
CAPTAIN OF COMPANY 7!! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE TOUGHEST SOLDIER ON THE FORCE!
POP

CLANG CLANG
カンカン
FIRE!!
カンカン
FIRE!!
カンカン
CLANG CLANG
CLANG CLANG

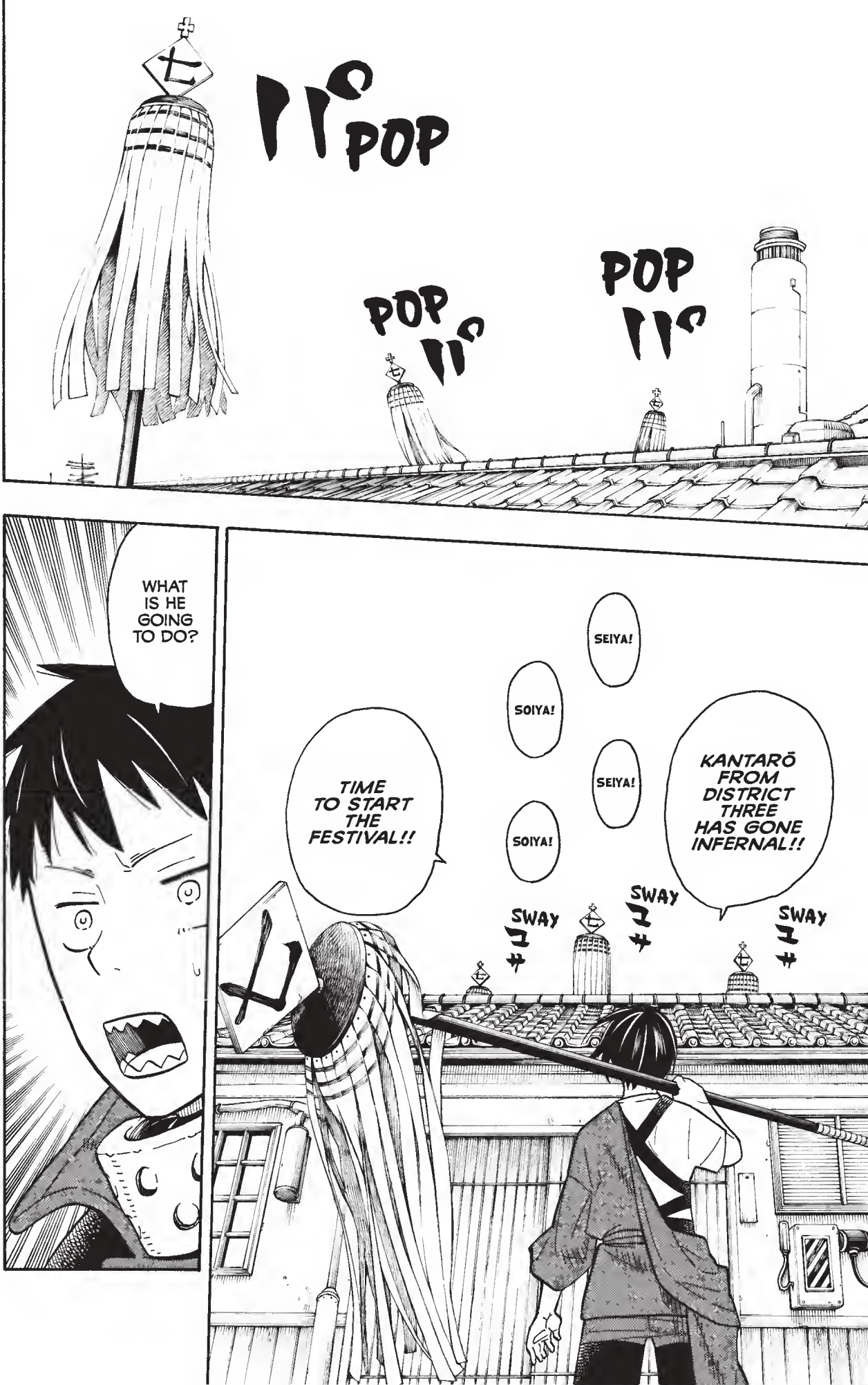

DAMMIT ...
THIS IS YOUR FAULT, WAKA... YOU JINXED US WHEN YOU SAID THAT.

AN INFER-NAL?!

IS THAT IT?

SFF
I BETTER NOT SEE YOU HERE WHEN I GET BACK.

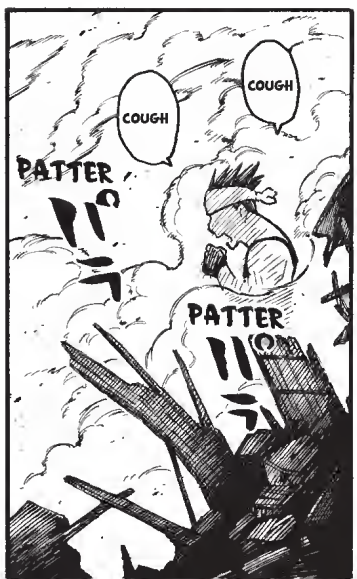
GET THAT WATER! NOW!!
IT'S KANTARŌ! HE ALWAYS DID LIKE A SPECTACLE!!
IS IT AN INFERNAL?
BUT HE *JUST* INVITED ME TO GO DRINKING WITH HIM...
FWIP
YOU'VE EVACUATED THE AREA, RIGHT? WHERE IS HE?
THEY'RE MARKING THE SPOT WITH SOME MATOI!


POP
POP
POP
WHAT IS HE GOING TO DO?
TIME TO START THE FESTIVAL!!
SEIYA!
SOIYA!
SEIYA!
SOIYA!
KANTARŌ FROM DISTRICT THREE HAS GONE INFERNAL!!
SWAY
SWAY
SWAY

IP
RI
GH
SWISH
SHA-BWOH

BAM
BAM
BAM

PEOPLE LIVE IN THOSE HOUSES !!


COUGH
COUGH
PATTER
PATTER

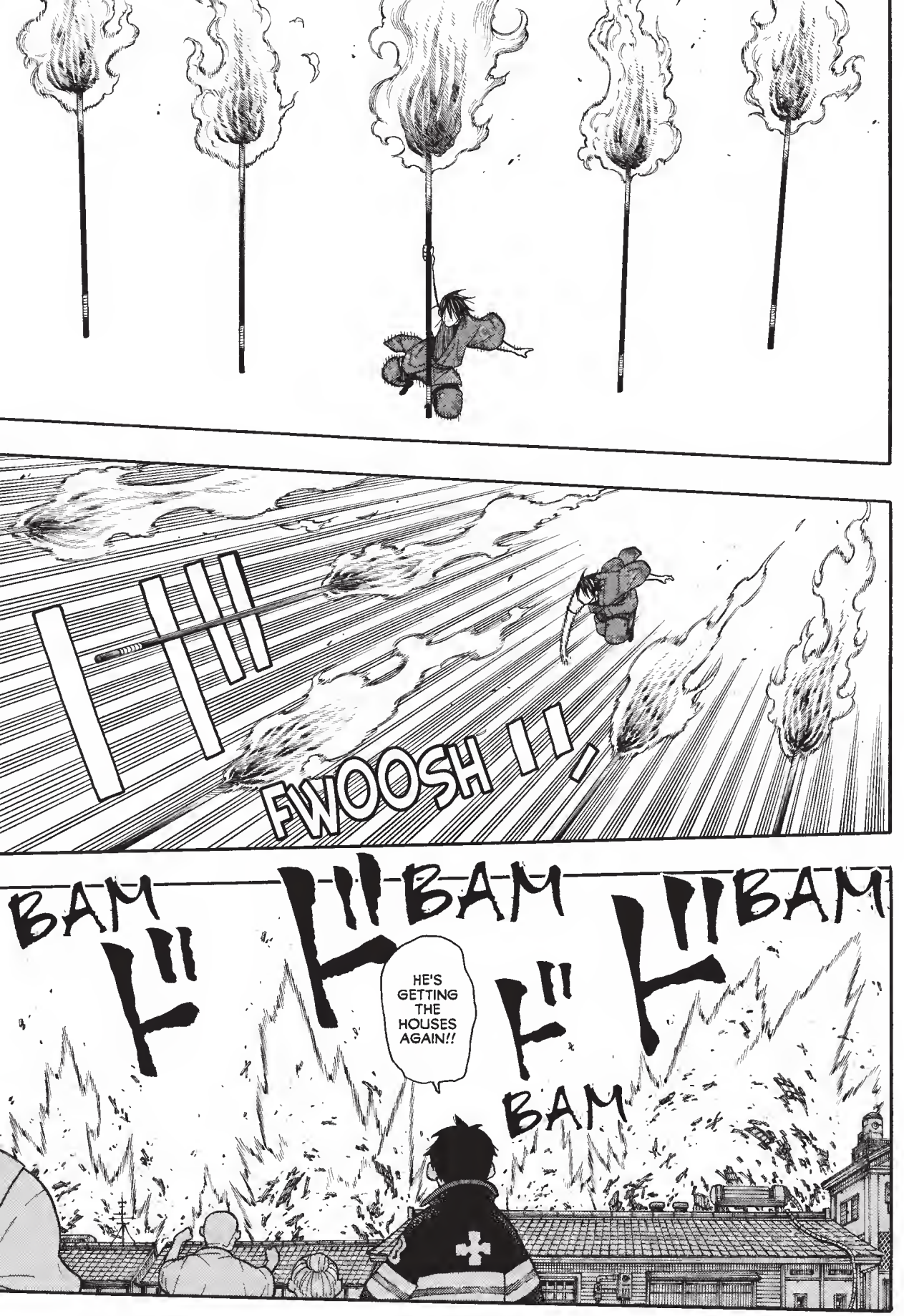
FOUR, MAYBE FIVE?
HOW MANY DID I GET?

I HATE TO THINK WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I GOT CAUGHT DOING THIS IN COMPANY 1.
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?!
GIVE 'IM A SHOW, WAKA!!

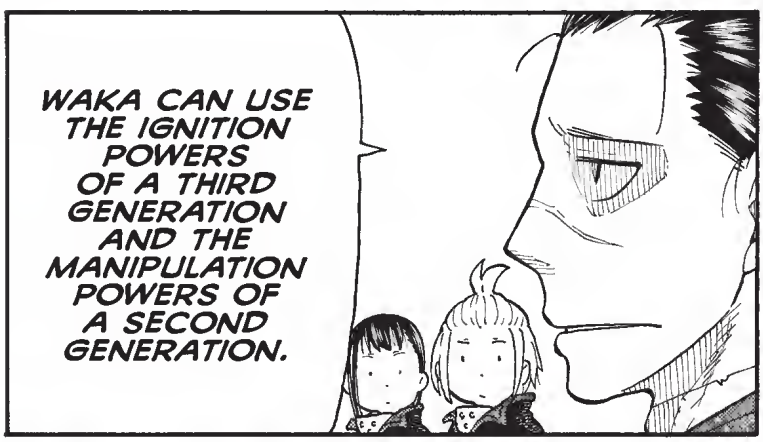
I'M ON MY WAY.
KA-POP
WAKA!! KANTARŌ'S OVER HERE!!
DASH
WHAT IS THAT CAPTAIN'S POWER?
HE FLEW AWAY ...
VWOH

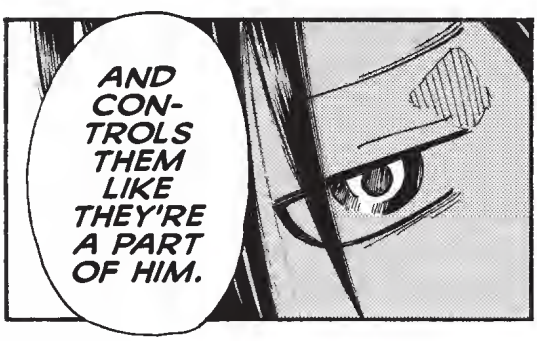
VROO-
ROO-
ROO-
ROOM
ボゴゴゴ
THERE YOU ARE, YOU OLD FART!

ギュン
GZHNG
WAKA !!!
TOSS


FWOOSH!!
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
HE'S GETTING THE HOUSES AGAIN!!

THIS IS INSANE.
I WONDER IF HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO THOSE MATOI...
WHAT'S GOING ON? IS HE IGNITING FIRES AND CONTROLLING THE FLAMES?

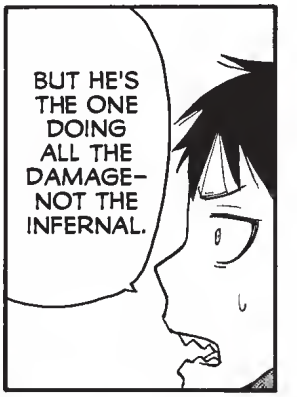

WAKA CAN USE THE IGNITION POWERS OF A THIRD GENERATION AND THE MANIPULATION POWERS OF A SECOND GENERATION.

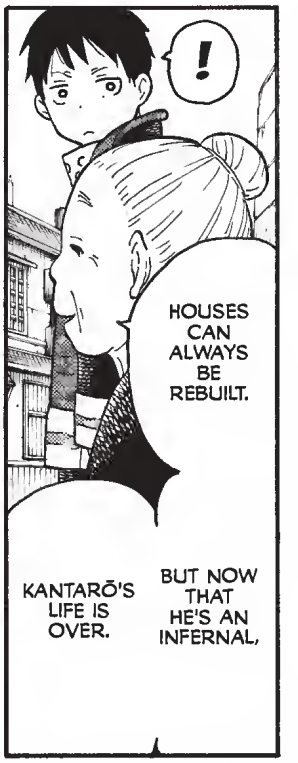

AND CON-TROLS THEM LIKE THEY'RE A PART OF HIM.

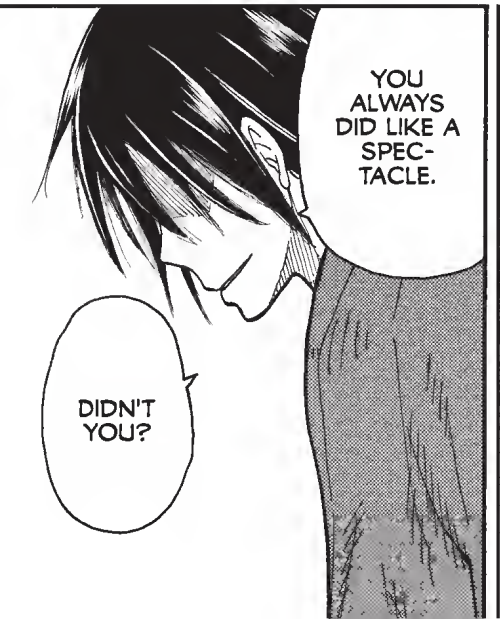
HE LIGHTS THE FIRES AT WILL.

THERE'S NO ONE ELSE LIKE HIM-HE'S A COMPOSITE FIRE SOLDIER.

WHOOOOSH
LOOK AROUND YOU, KANTARŌ!! THE TOWN IS IN SHAMBLES!!
RAISING THIS KIND OF HELL AT YOUR AGE? YOU OLD GEEZER!!


BUT HE'S THE ONE DOING ALL THE DAMAGE— NOT THE INFERNAL.


!
HOUSES CAN ALWAYS BE REBUILT.
KANTARŌ'S LIFE IS OVER.
BUT NOW THAT HE'S AN INFERNAL,


YOU ALWAYS DID LIKE A SPEC-TACLE.
DIDN'T YOU?

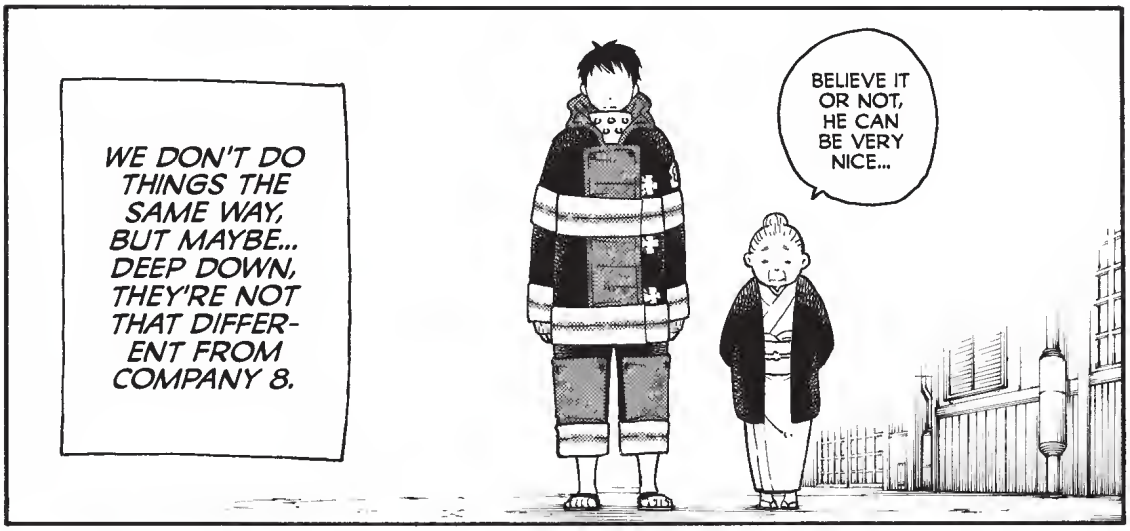
NOEEEEEE
CRACKLE CRACKLE

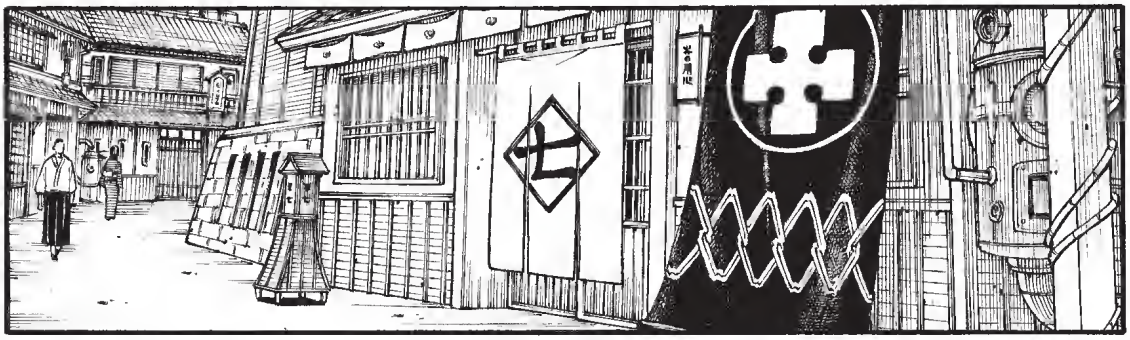
WHAM!!!

YOU DID GOOD.

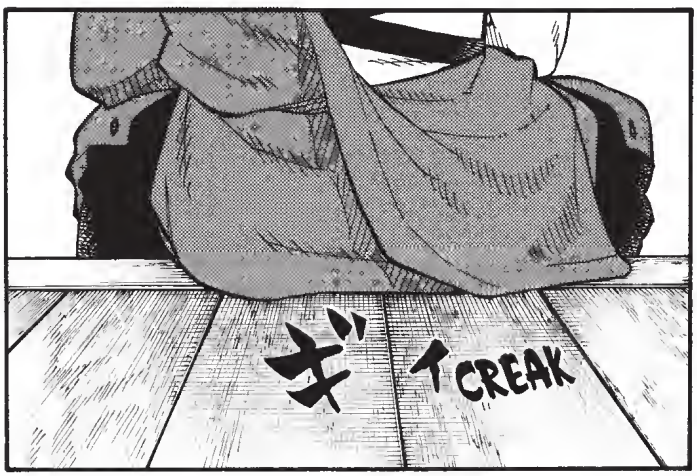
SH-SHHH
GRAB
DOES BENIMARU-CHAN'S STYLE SEEM ROUGH TO YOU, COMPANY 8?
THANK YOU. FOR HELPING ME SEE... KANTARŌ'S LAST MOMENTS.
...

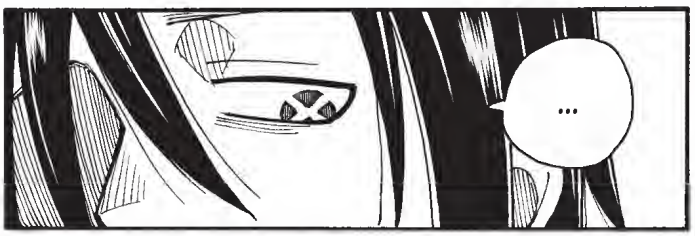
IN THIS WORLD, EVERYONE LIVES IN FEAR OF THE FLAMES THAT WILL TURN THEM INFERNAL. WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO DIE.
YOUR HOLY SOL TEMPLE PRAYERS ARE AN OFFERING TO THE DEAD, AND SO IS OUR DESTRUCTION OF THE TOWN.
武
EVERYONE HERE AGREES THAT IF THEY'RE GOING TO DIE ANYWAY, THEY WANT IT TO BE AT BENIMARU-CHAN'S HAND.
WAAAAHH
THE HANDS OF SHINMON BENIMARU... THE DESTROYER OF ASAKUSA.

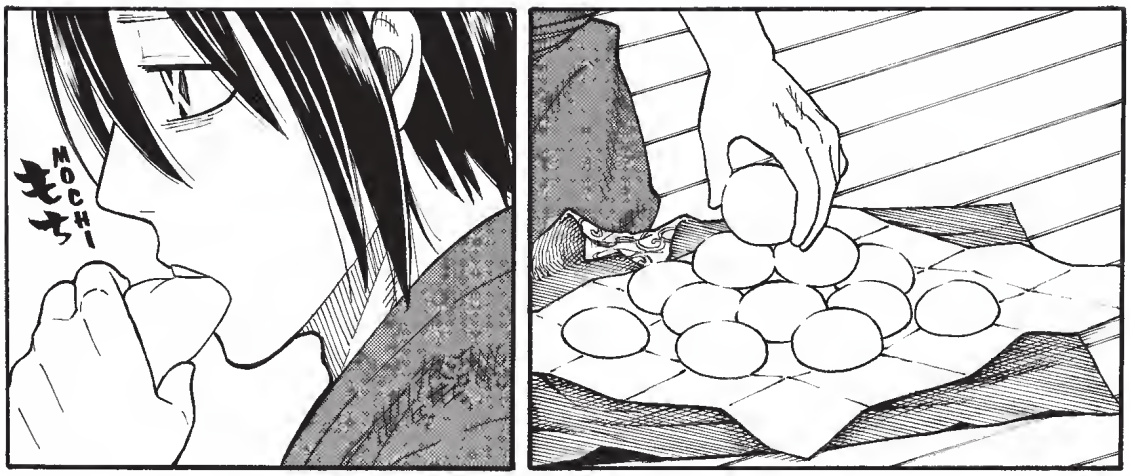


Curtain: Seven



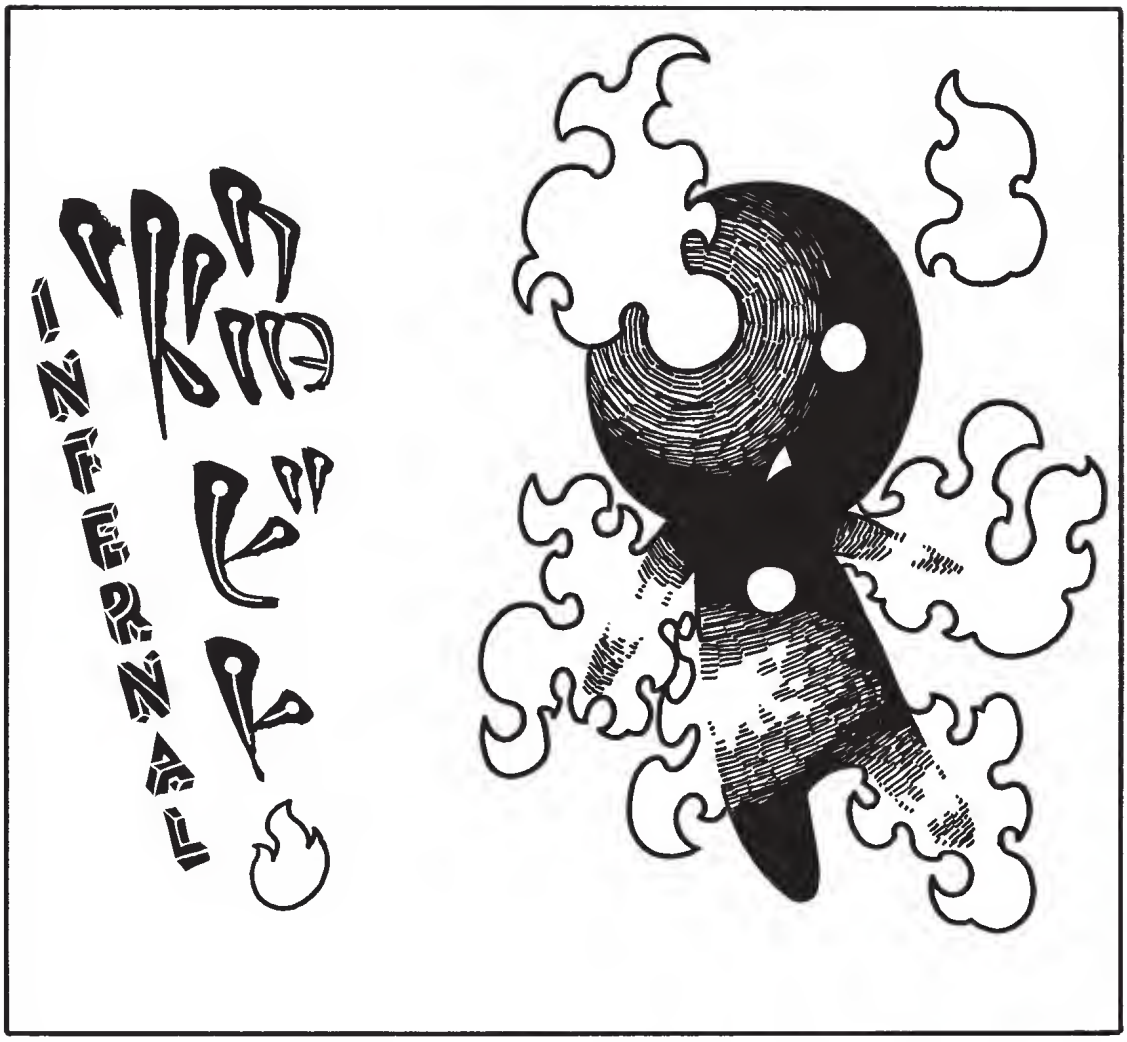



MOCHI
もち

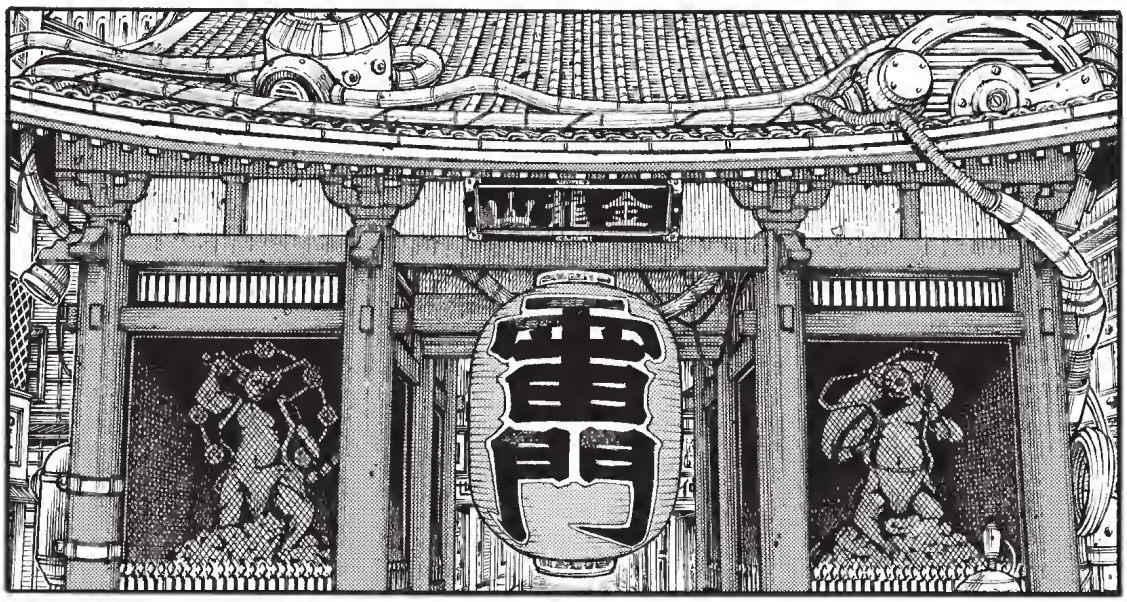
THAT'S SWEET ...
MUNCH
MUNCH
もぐ
もぐ

FIRE FORCE

FIRE
FORCE



# CHAPTER XL: THE NIGHT BEFORE THE BATTLE OF ASAKUSA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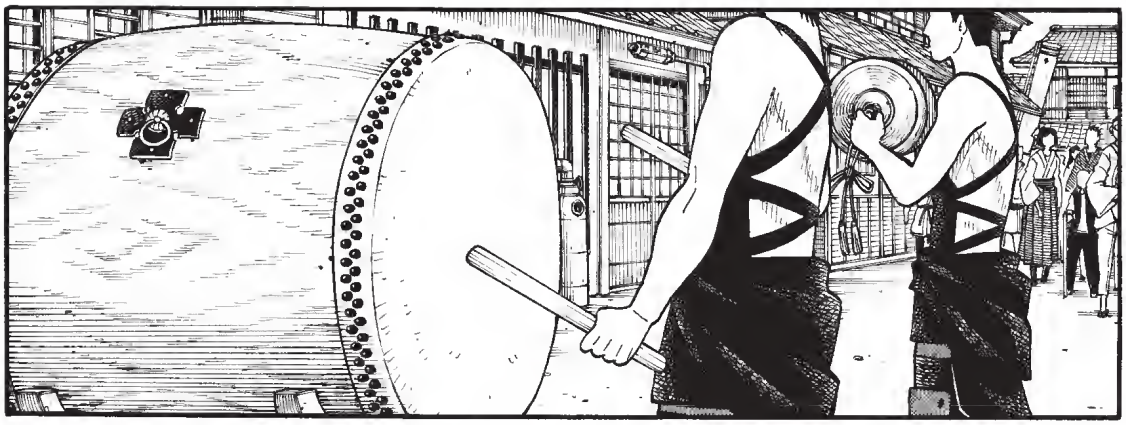
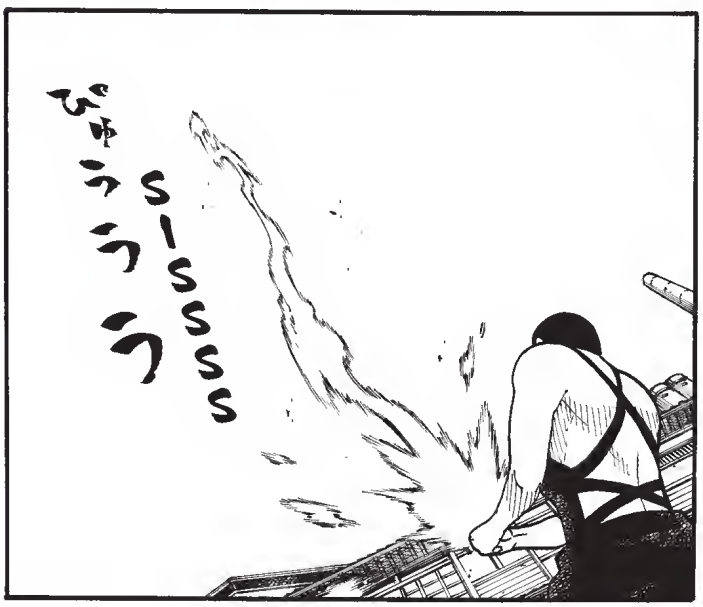
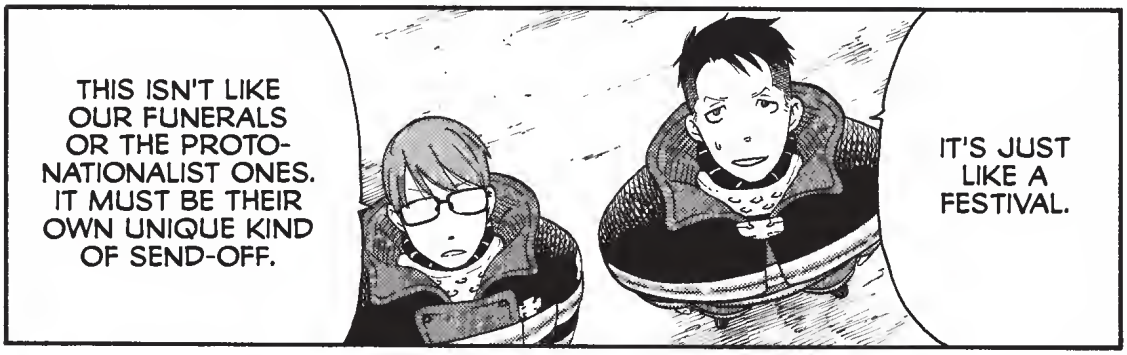
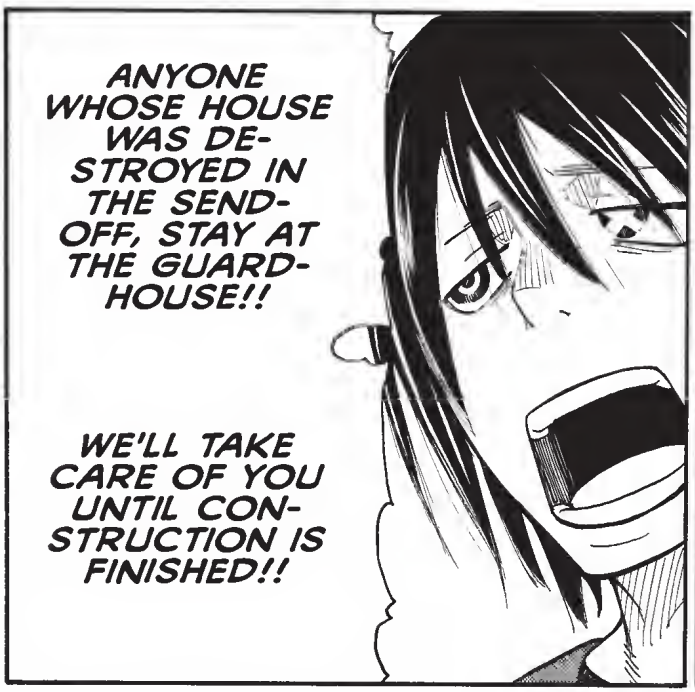
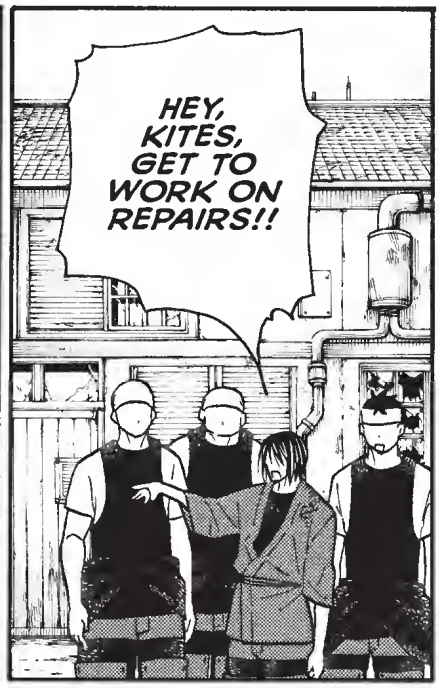


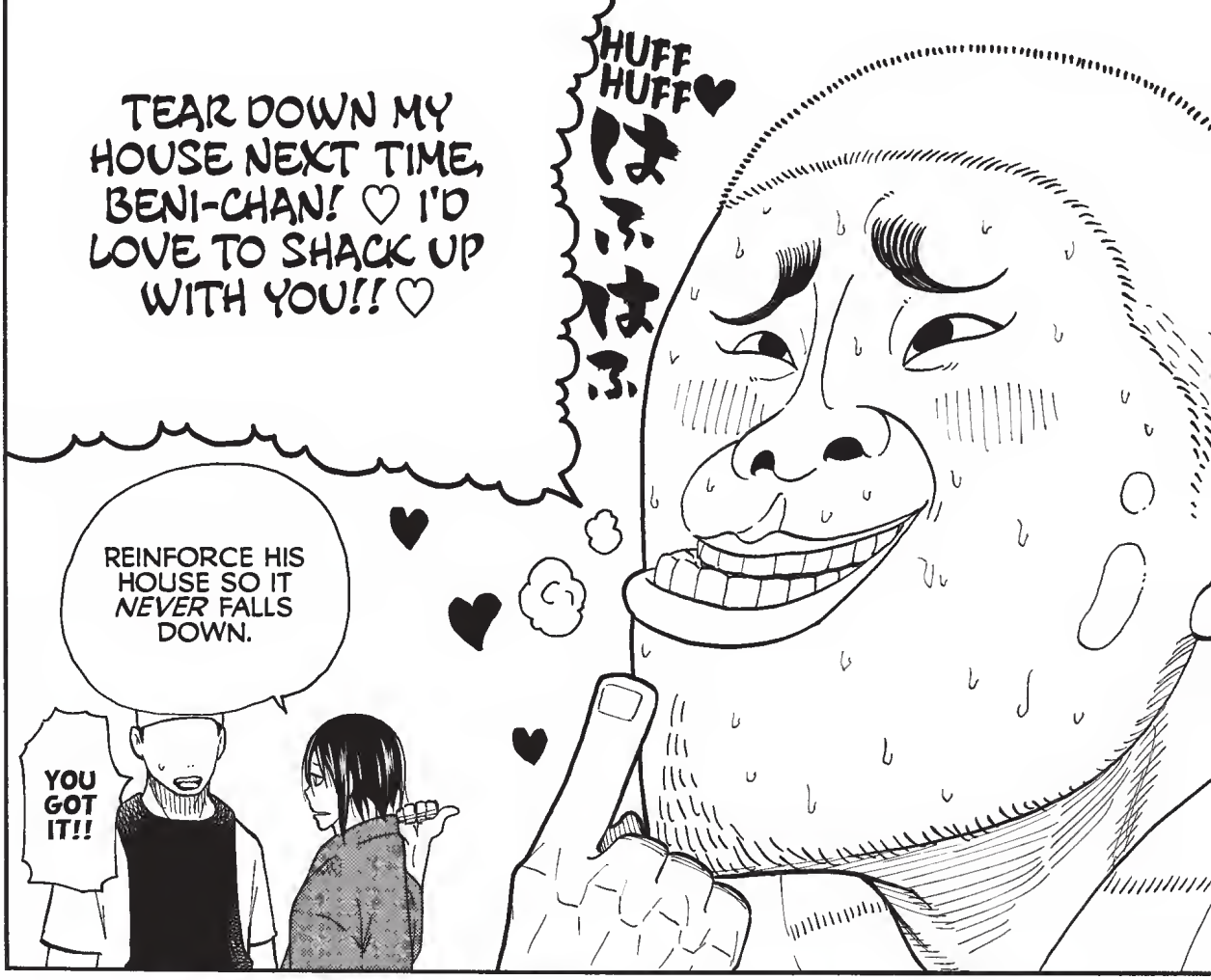

SISSSS

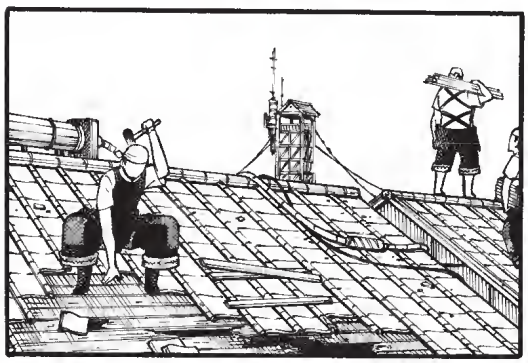
BOOM
BOOM

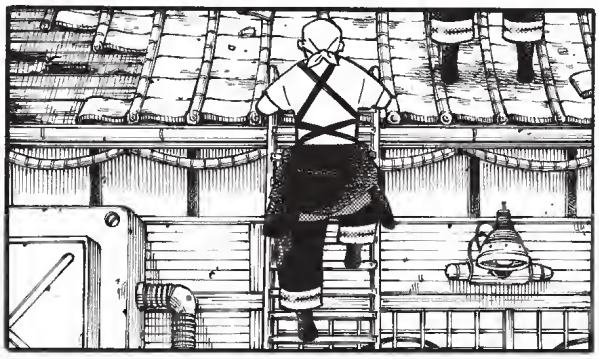

THIS ISN'T LIKE OUR FUNERALS OR THE PROTO-NATIONALIST ONES. IT MUST BE THEIR OWN UNIQUE KIND OF SEND-OFF.
IT'S JUST LIKE A FESTIVAL.

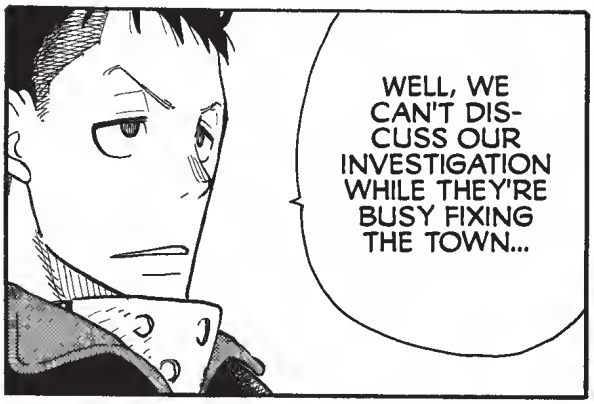

ANYONE WHOSE HOUSE WAS DE-STROYED IN THE SEND-OFF, STAY AT THE GUARD-HOUSE!!
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU UNTIL CON-STRUCTION IS FINISHED!!

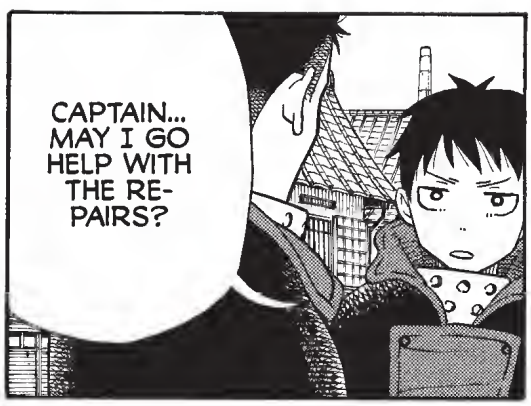

HEY, KITES, GET TO WORK ON REPAIRS!!


TEAR DOWN MY HOUSE NEXT TIME, BENI-CHAN! ♡ I'D LOVE TO SHACK UP WITH YOU!! ♡
HUFF HUFF♥
はふはふ
REINFORCE HIS HOUSE SO IT *NEVER* FALLS DOWN.
YOU GOT IT!!



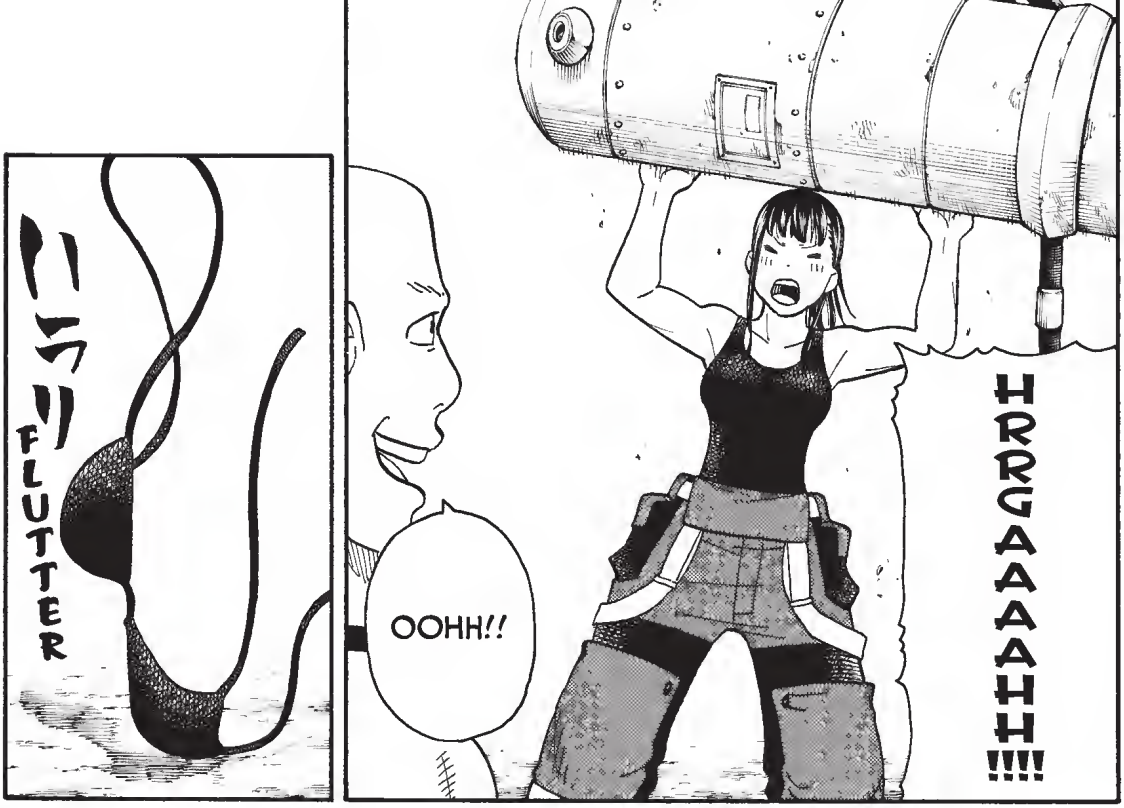



WELL, WE CAN'T DISCUSS OUR INVESTIGATION WHILE THEY'RE BUSY FIXING THE TOWN...

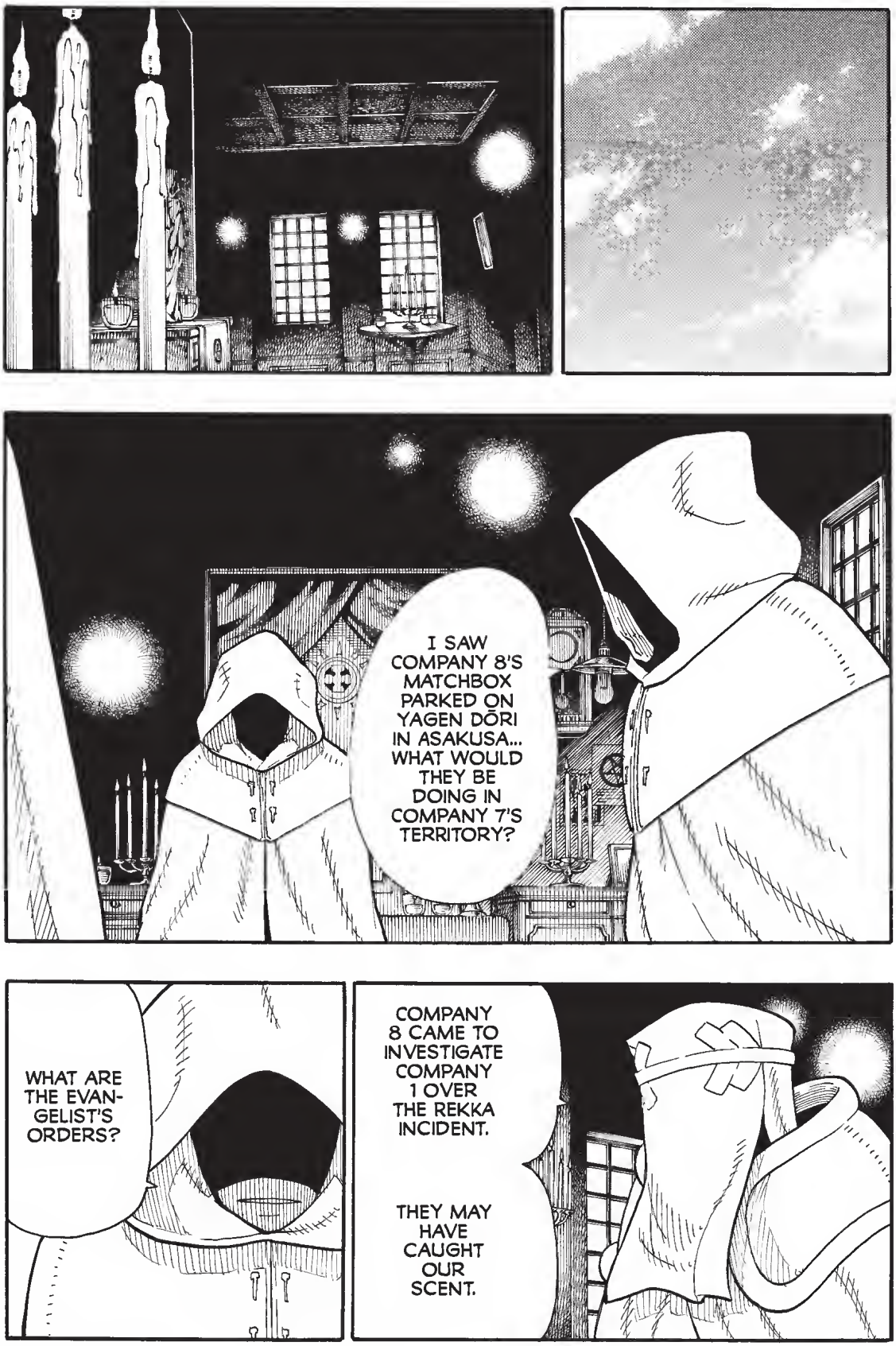

CAPTAIN... MAY I GO HELP WITH THE REPAIRS?

LET COMPANY 8 HELP, SIR!!
BRING ME THAT LUMBER!
YES, SIR!!
?!
OI...
WITH MY POWER, HEAVY LOADS AND HIGH PLACES ARE NO PROB-LEM!!
FWOOM
...

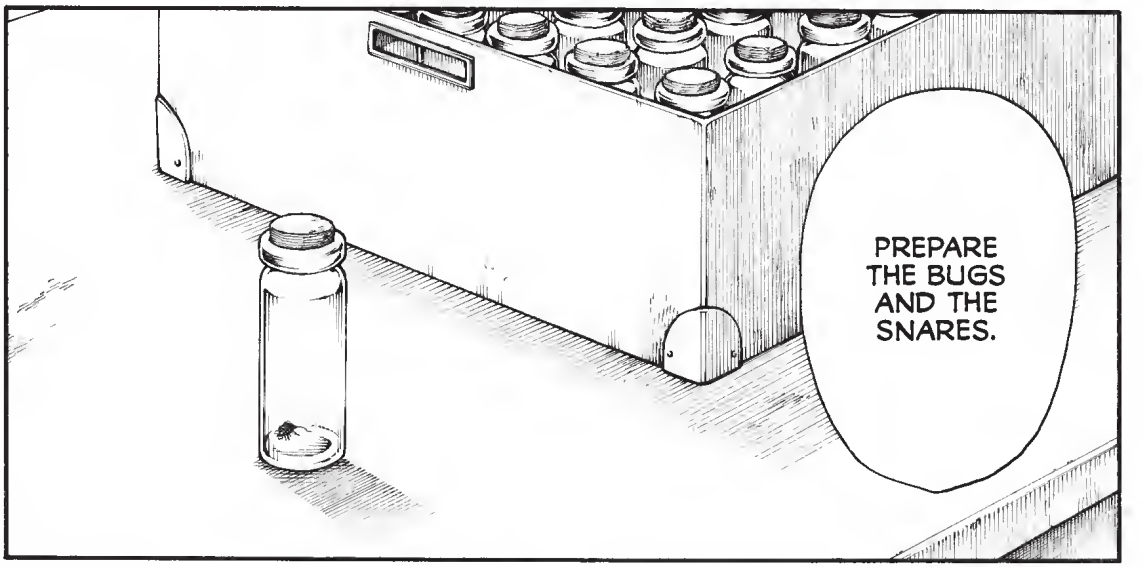
ALLOW ME TO ASSIST YOU WITH WELDING!!
SFF
I'LL GET THIS RUBBLE OUT OF THE WAY!
OH!! NOT BAD.
SURPRISINGLY GOOD WITH HIS HANDS
SIZ-SIZZLE
SIZZLE-ZLE
THIS IS GONNA BE TOO HEAVY TO MOVE.
ZMM
TAK
TAK
TAK


HRRGAAAHH!!!!
OOHH!!
FLUTTER

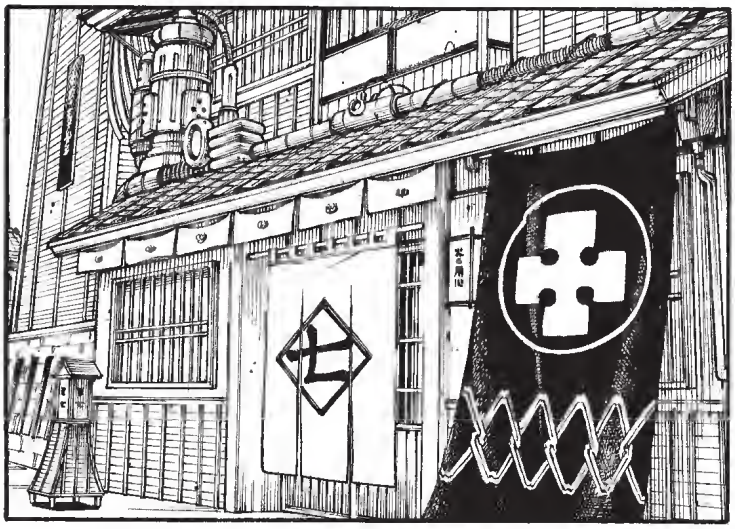
MEOOOW!!
OOHH!
WHY?!!

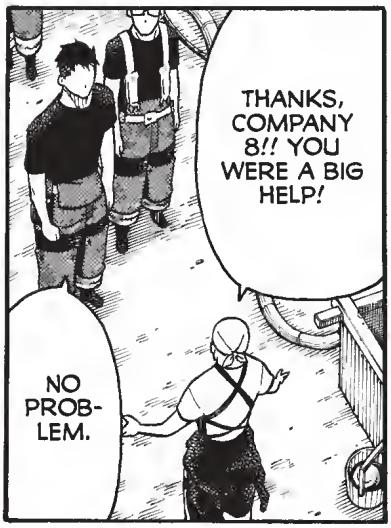

I SAW COMPANY 8'S MATCHBOX PARKED ON YAGEN DŌRI IN ASAKUSA... WHAT WOULD THEY BE DOING IN COMPANY 7'S TERRITORY?
WHAT ARE THE EVANGELIST'S ORDERS?
COMPANY 8 CAME TO INVESTIGATE COMPANY 1 OVER THE REKKA INCIDENT.
THEY MAY HAVE CAUGHT OUR SCENT.

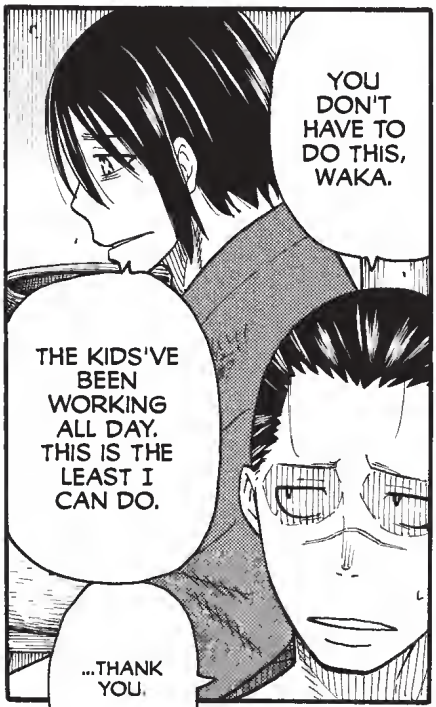
ERASE THEM.
WE FAILED TO FINISH THEM OFF LAST TIME.


PREPARE THE BUGS AND THE SNARES.

OKAY, TIME TO CALL IT A DAY.

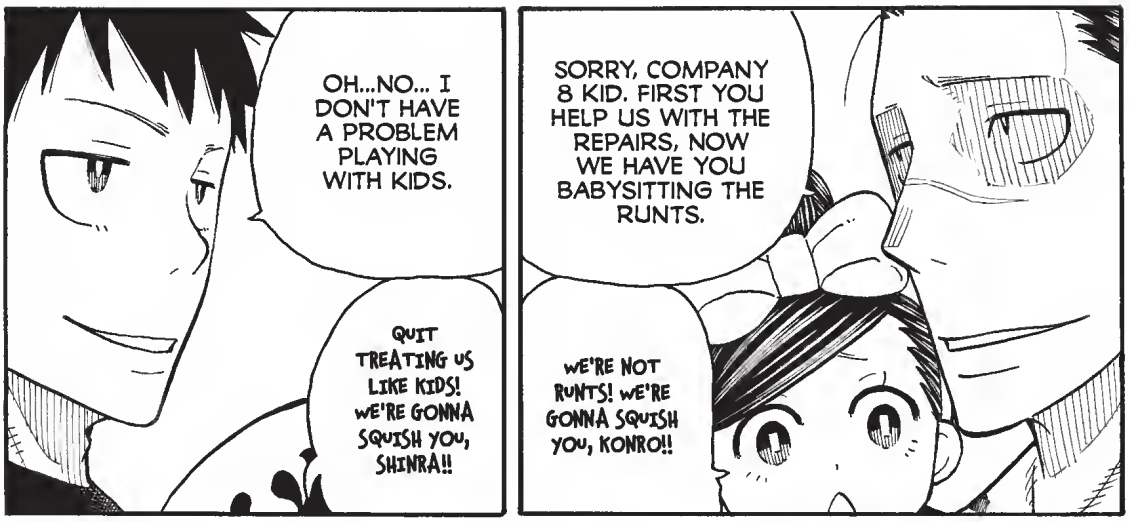


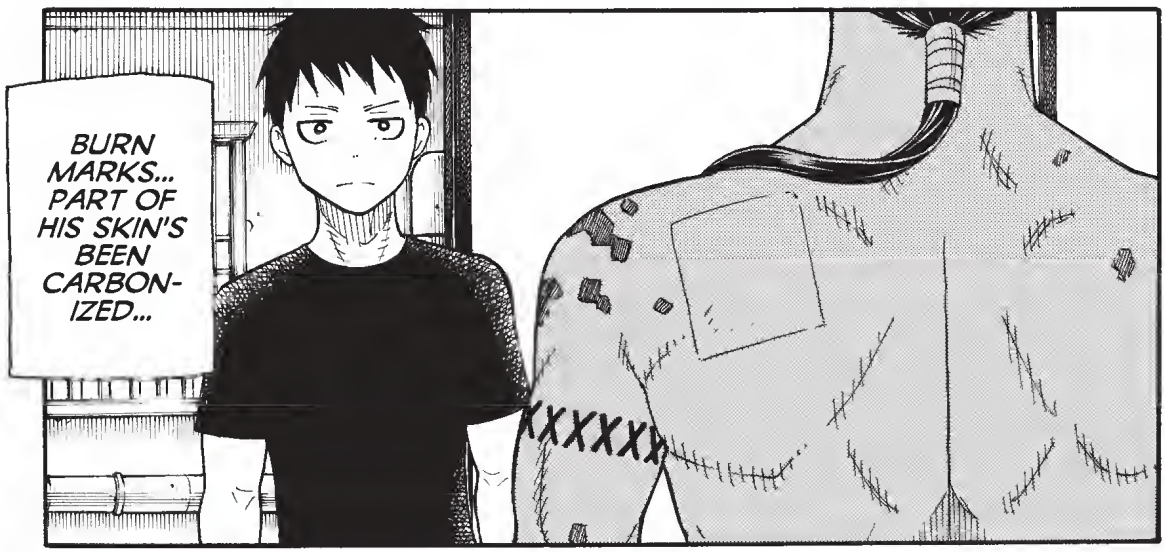

THANKS, COMPANY 8!! YOU WERE A BIG HELP!
NO PROB-LEM.

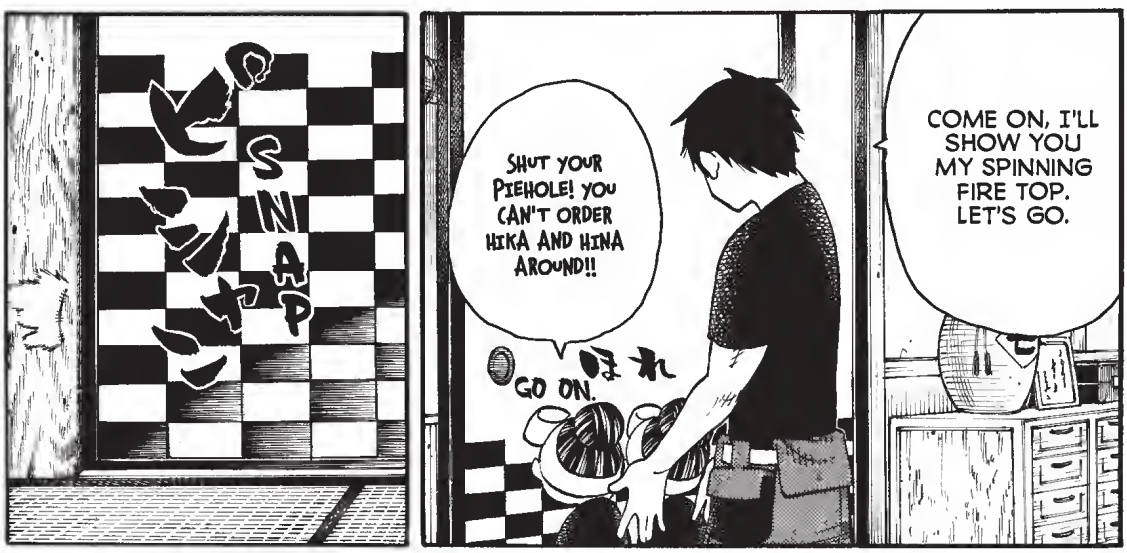

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, WAKA.
THE KIDS'VE BEEN WORKING ALL DAY. THIS IS THE LEAST I CAN DO.
...THANK YOU.

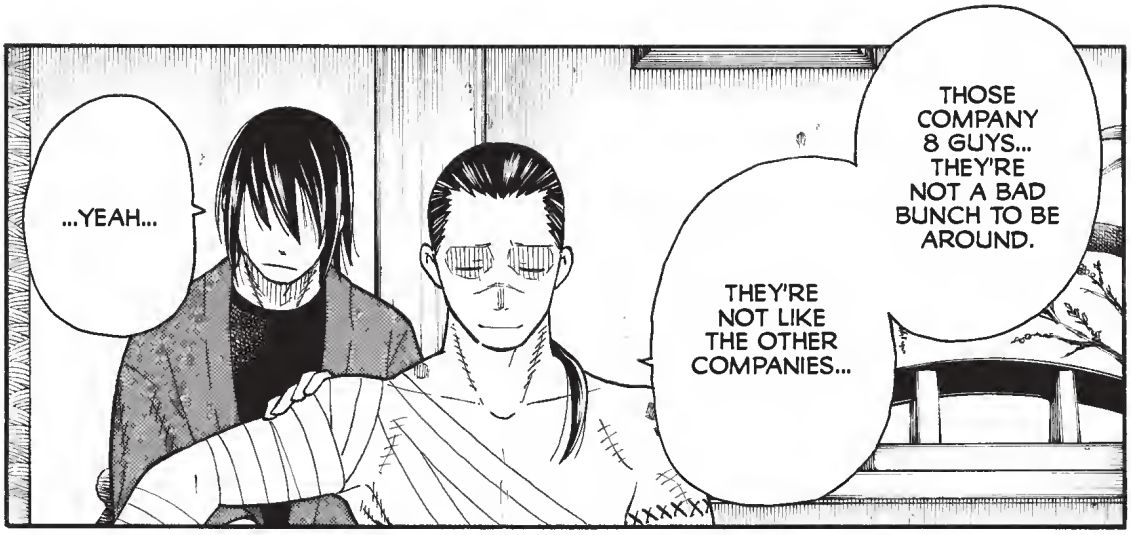
DID THAT HURT?
!
SMACK
WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON SUPPRESSANTS. WE'LL HAVE TO ORDER SOME MORE FROM HAIJIMA.
NO...
IT WAS JUST COLD.
COMPANY 7 IS A BUNCH OF HOOLIGANS. A GUY WHO CAN'T FIGHT WOULD NEVER MAKE IT AS CAPTAIN.
REALLY, KONRO... YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN CAPTAIN...

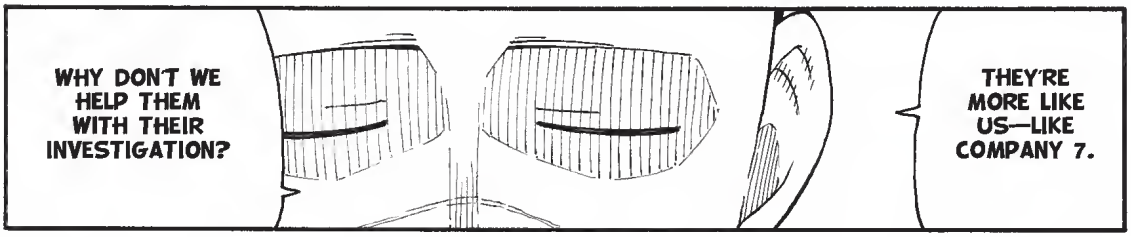
OOOOOH!!
RATTLE
RATTLE
カラン
HEY... WAIT...
wAKA!!
KONRO!!
TEP
TEP
TEP
HE SHOOTS FIRE FROM HIS FREAKIN' FEET AND SPINS AND SPINS AND SPINS! IT'S SO STUPID!
SPINNING FIRE TOP?
IT'S CALLED BREAKING! BREAK DANCING! IT'S NOT STUPID, IT'S AWESOME!!
"DAMN TWERP"? I'M PLAYING TAG WITH YOU, YOU LITTLE PUNKS.
I'M NOT GONNA SHOW YOU MY SPINNING FIRE TOP ANYMORE.
HIKAGE, HINATA. WHAT'S UP?
THAT DAMN TWERP KEEPS CHASING HIKA AND HINA AND TRYING TO EAT US! IT'S FREAKIN' MESSED UP!

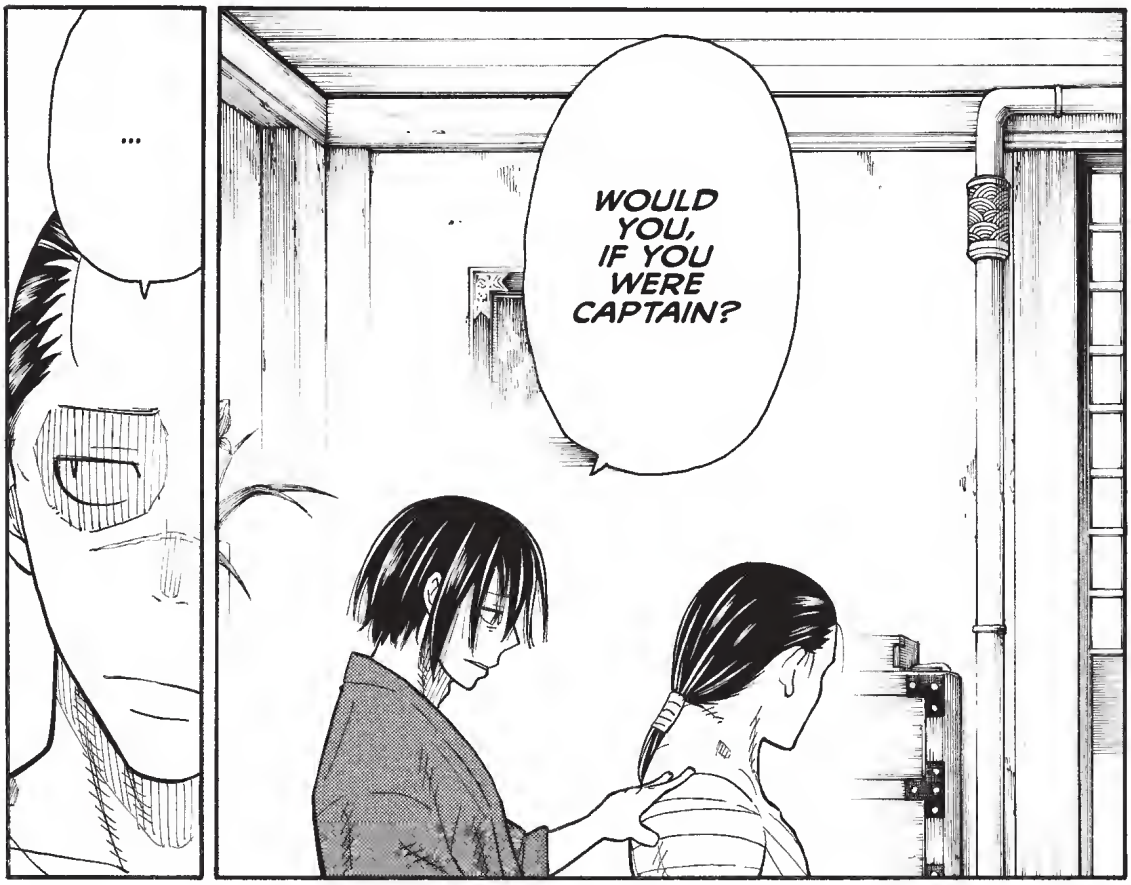

OH...NO... I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM PLAYING WITH KIDS.
QUIT TREATING US LIKE KIDS! WE'RE GONNA SQUISH YOU, SHINRA!!
SORRY, COMPANY 8 KID. FIRST YOU HELP US WITH THE REPAIRS, NOW WE HAVE YOU BABYSITTING THE RUNTS.
WE'RE NOT RUNTS! WE'RE GONNA SQUISH YOU, KONRO!!


BURN MARKS... PART OF HIS SKIN'S BEEN CARBON-IZED...

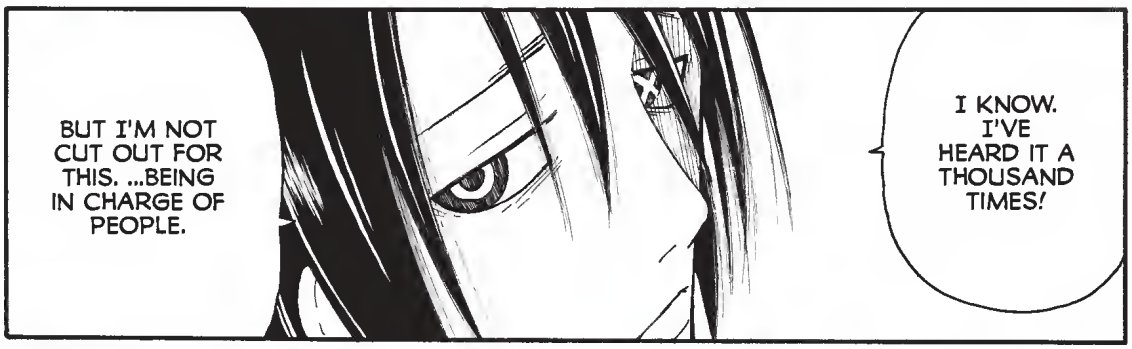

SNAP
パキン
SHUT YOUR PIEHOLE! YOU CAN'T ORDER HIKA AND HINA AROUND!!
GO ON.
ほれ
COME ON, I'LL SHOW YOU MY SPINNING FIRE TOP. LET'S GO.


...YEAH...
THOSE COMPANY 8 GUYS... THEY'RE NOT A BAD BUNCH TO BE AROUND.
THEY'RE NOT LIKE THE OTHER COMPANIES...

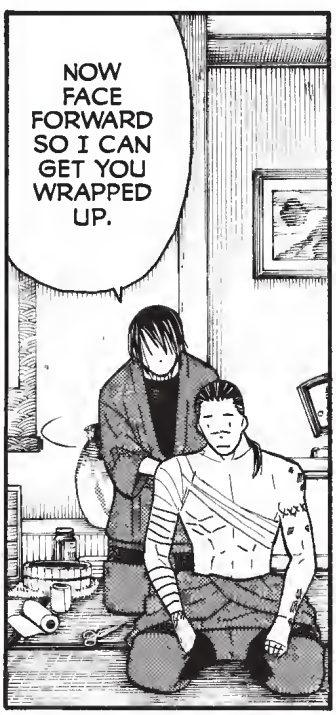

WHY DON'T WE HELP THEM WITH THEIR INVESTIGATION?
THEY'RE MORE LIKE US—LIKE COMPANY 7.

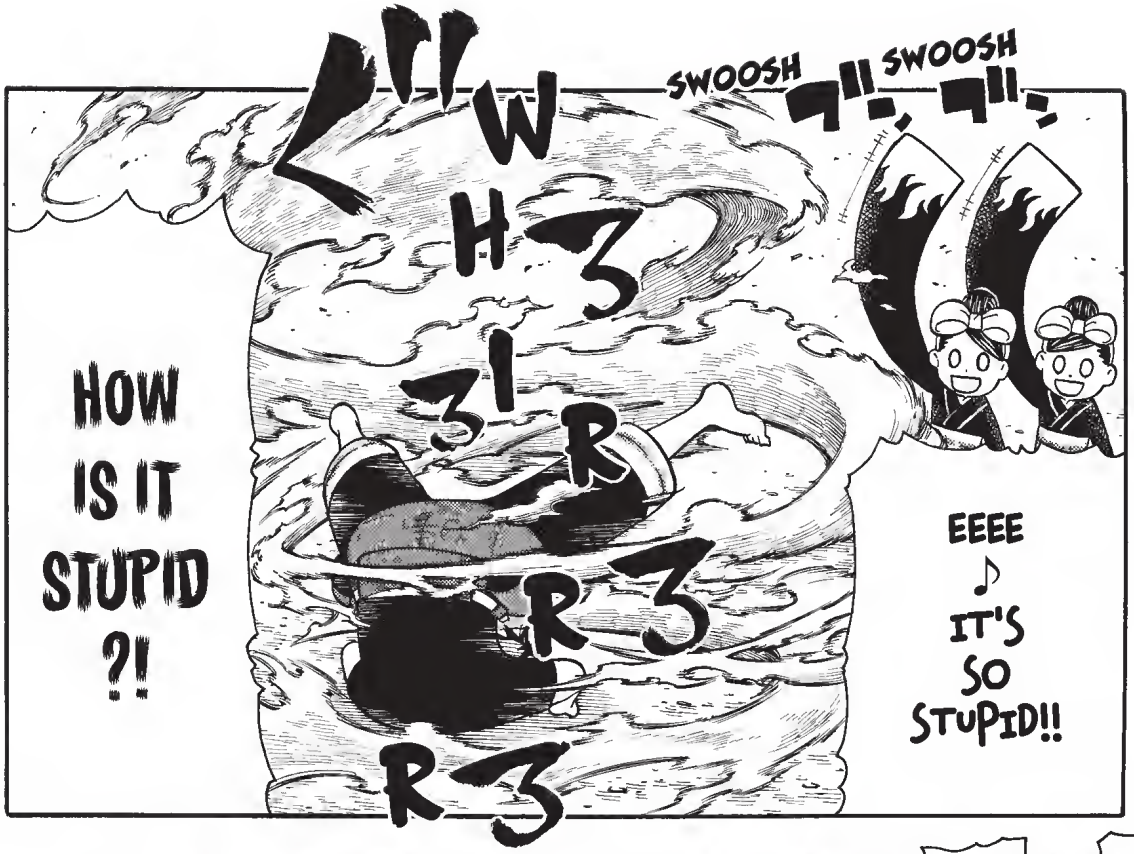

...
WOULD YOU, IF YOU WERE CAPTAIN?

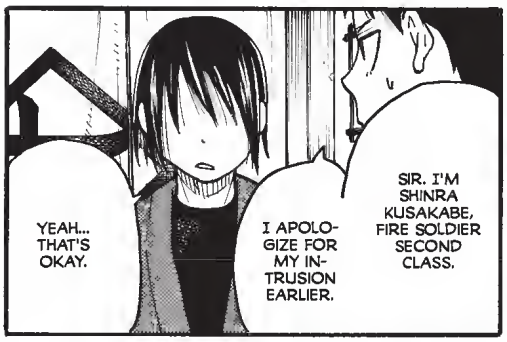
WAKA!
WE DIDN'T MAKE YOU OUR CAPTAIN JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE TOUGH.
AND COMPANY 8 CHOSE TO HELP OUT BE-CAUSE YOU...


I KNOW. I'VE HEARD IT A THOUSAND TIMES!
BUT I'M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS. ...BEING IN CHARGE OF PEOPLE.

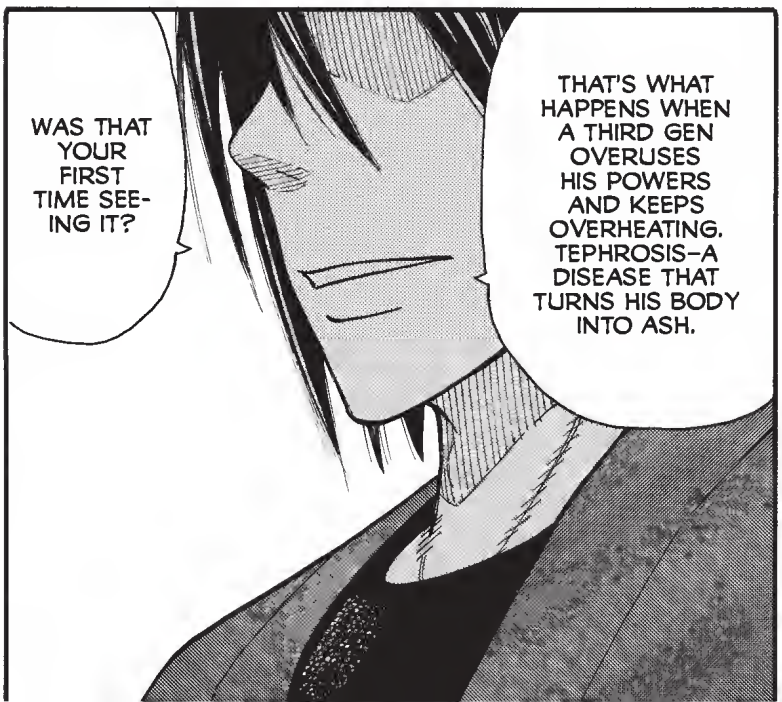
I THINK WE WILL HELP THEM.
I DON'T HAVE ANY-THING AGAINST COMPA-NY 8.

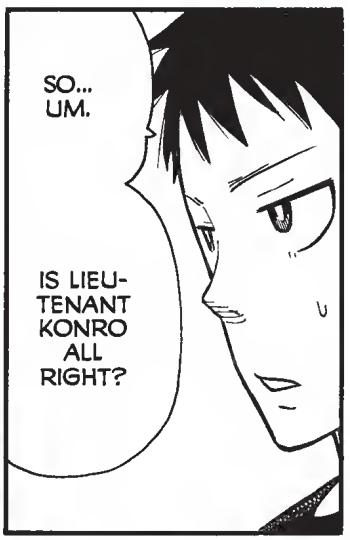

NOW FACE FORWARD SO I CAN GET YOU WRAPPED UP.


SWOOSH
SWOOSH
HOW IS IT STUPID ?!
EEEE ♪ IT'S SO STUPID!!

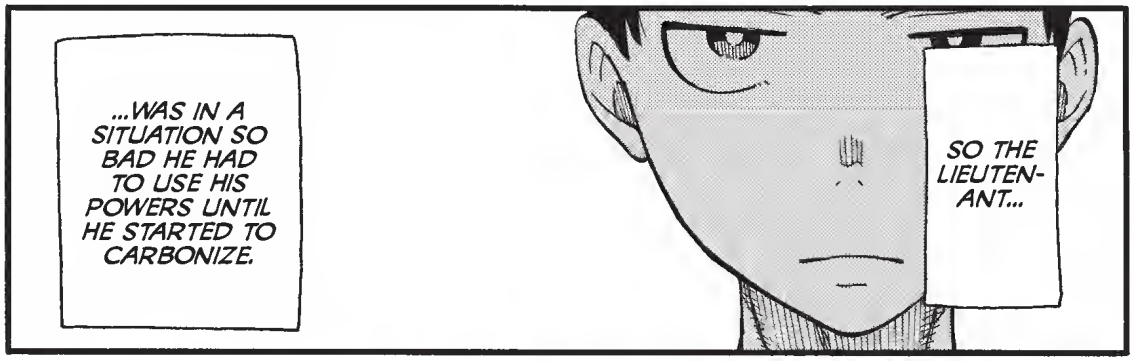

YEAH... THAT'S OKAY.
I APOLOGIZE FOR MY INTRUSION EARLIER.
SIR. I'M SHINRA KUSAKABE, FIRE SOLDIER SECOND CLASS.

AH!! WAKA!!
HUH...?
CAN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING NICE?!
I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU, YOU KNOW...
WHY?!


WAS THAT YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING IT?
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A THIRD GEN OVERUSES HIS POWERS AND KEEPS OVERHEATING. TEPHROSIS—A DISEASE THAT TURNS HIS BODY INTO ASH.

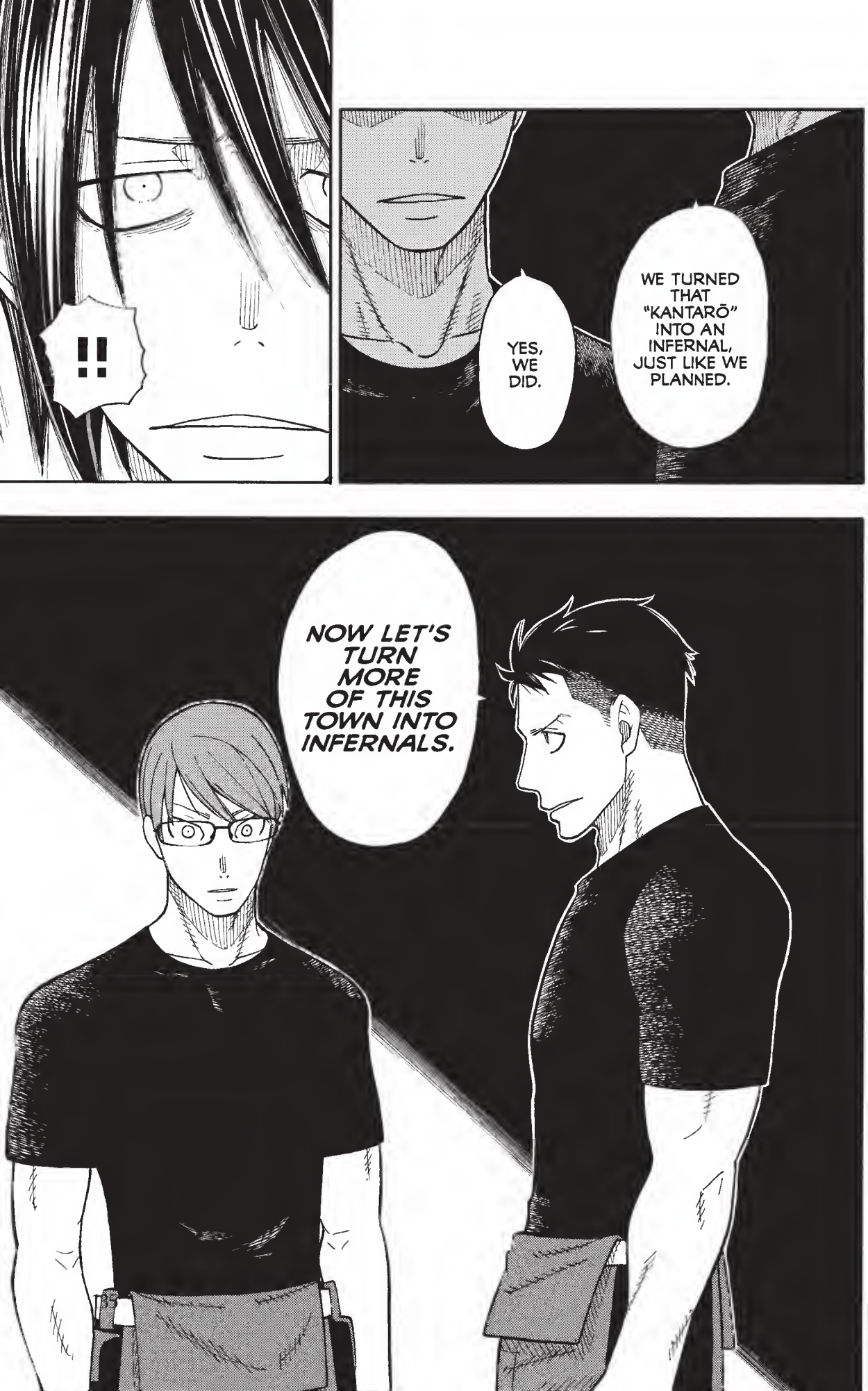

SO... UM.
IS LIEUTENANT KONRO ALL RIGHT?

I LEARNED ABOUT IT AT THE ACADEMY, BUT NO, I'D NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN IT.
WHEN IT HAPPENED, I...

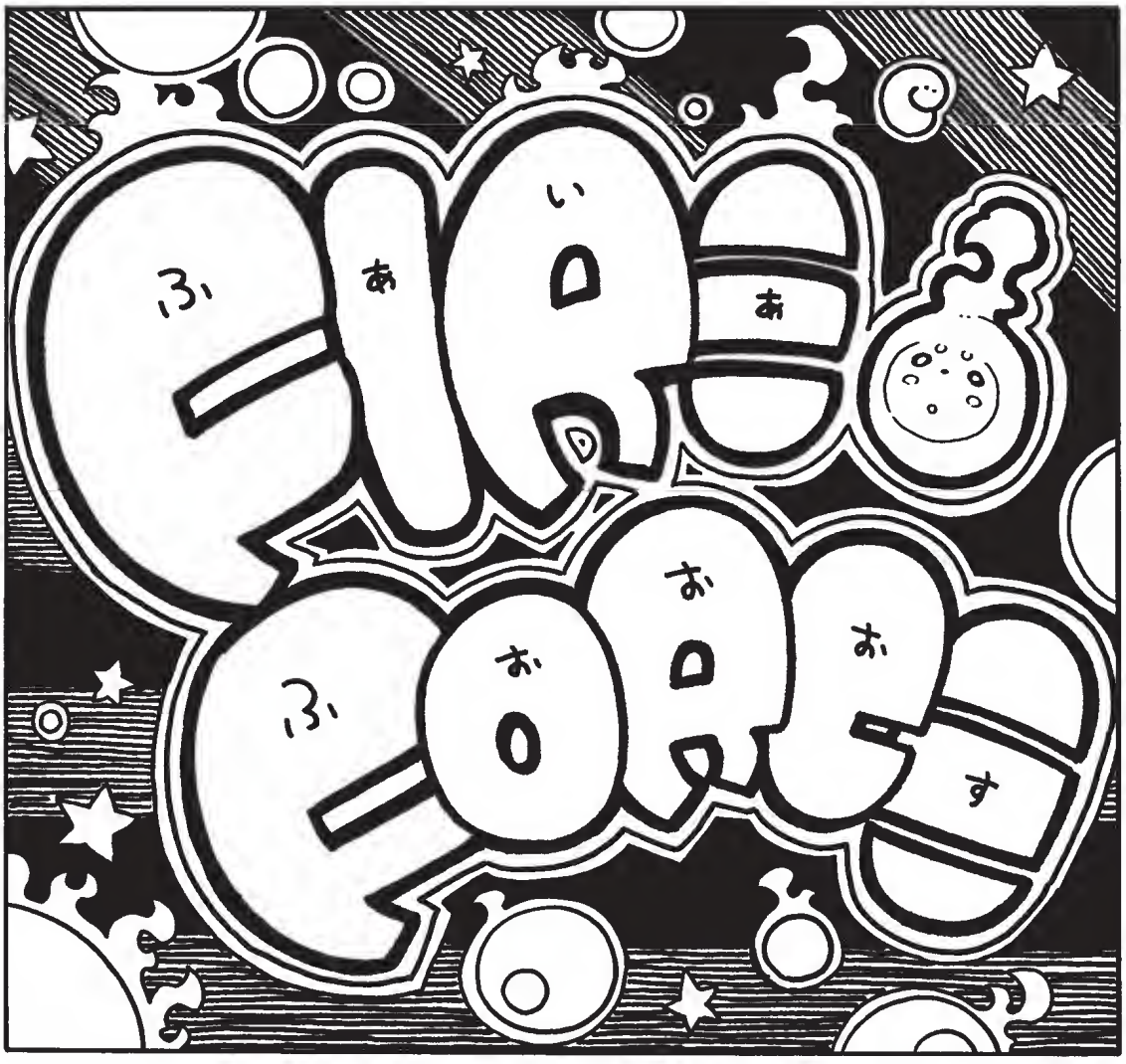

SO THE LIEUTENANT...
...WAS IN A SITUATION SO BAD HE HAD TO USE HIS POWERS UNTIL HE STARTED TO CARBONIZE.

SHINRA, WAS IT...?
I WANT TO TALK TO YOUR CAPTAIN. WHERE IS HE?
OH!! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE, ACTUALLY– THE CAPTAIN WANTED ME TO COME GET YOU!
HE'S TALKING WITH LIEUTENANT HINAWA OVER THAT WAY.

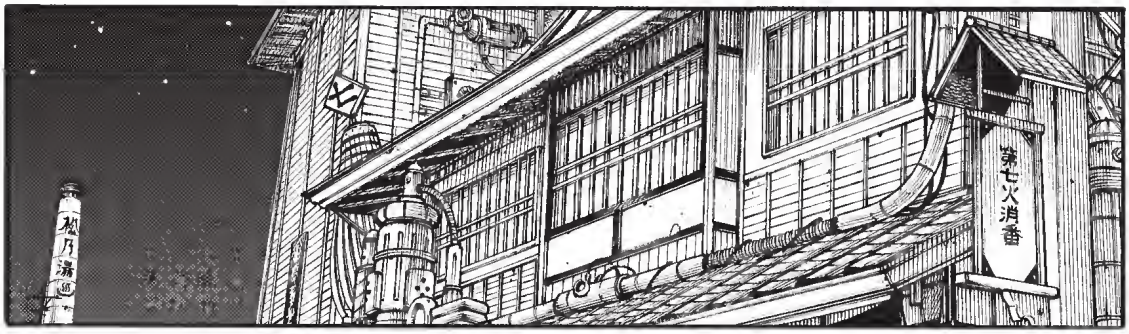
天麩羅
電気ブラン
仁丹
!
IS THIS THE PLACE?
?
IT WORKED, LIEUTENANT.
YES, IT DID.

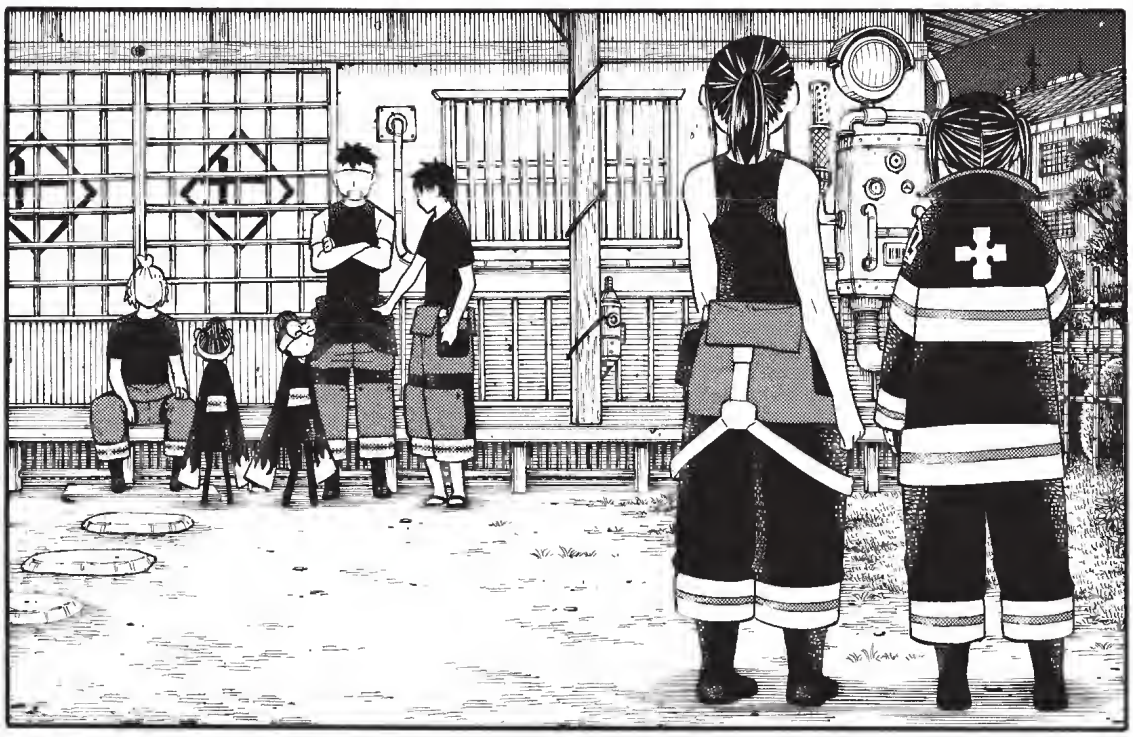

!!
YES, WE DID.
WE TURNED THAT "KANTARŌ" INTO AN INFERNAL, JUST LIKE WE PLANNED.
NOW LET'S TURN MORE OF THIS TOWN INTO INFERNALS.

FIRE FORCE




# CHAPTER XLI: A COMPOSITE FIRE SOLDIER ENRAGED

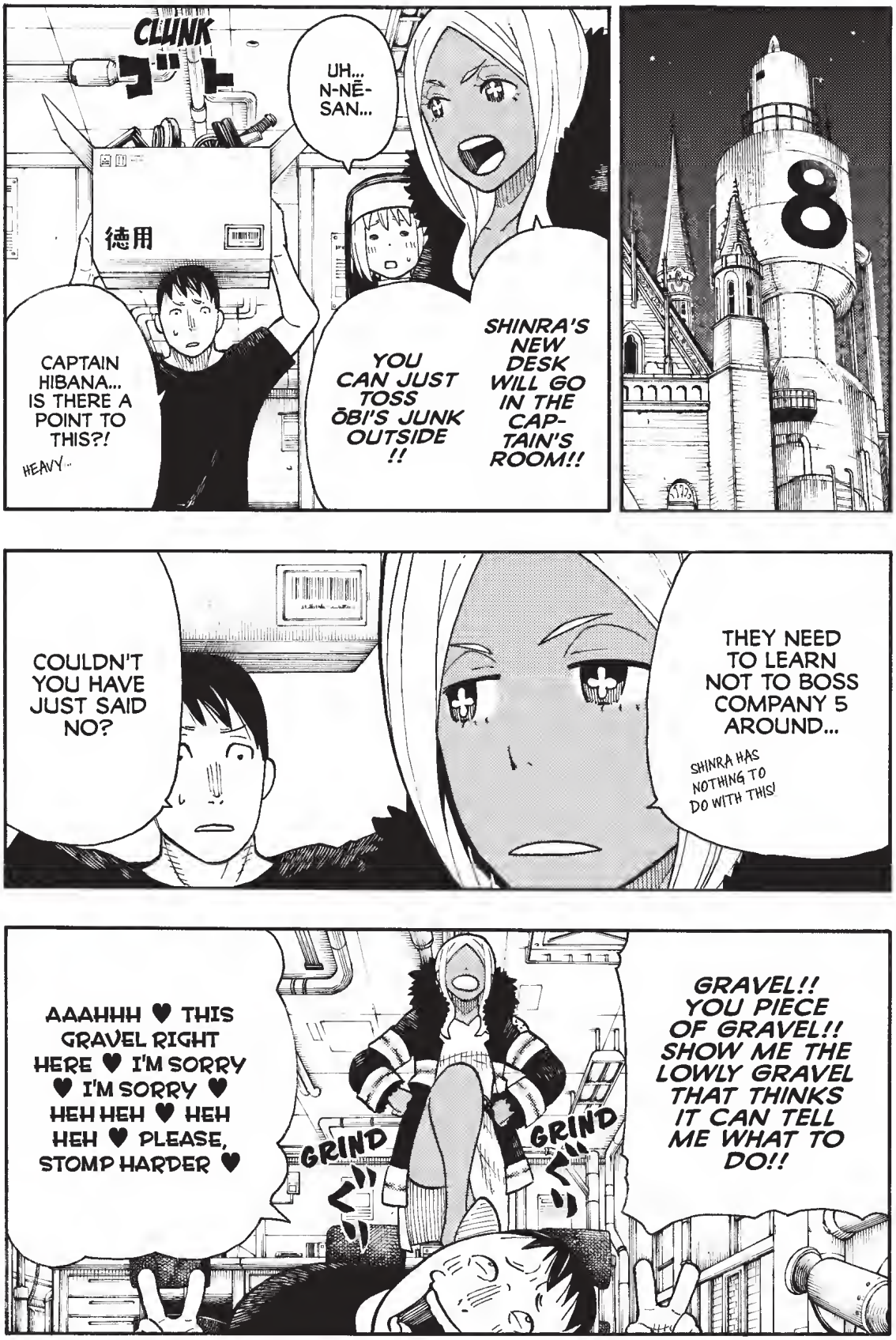

第七火消番
松乃湯



YO, KITTY!! TAKE YOUR CLOTHES OFF FOR US AGAIN!!
NOT A CHANCE !!

IT'S NOT WHY WE DID IT,
BUT HELPING WITH THE REPAIRS REALLY IMPROVED OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH COMPANY 7.

COMPANY 7'S CAPTAIN WAS JUST SAYING HE WANTS TO TALK TO CAPTAIN ŌBI,
SO I THINK HE IS GOING TO GIVE US THE OKAY.
I HOPE THIS HELPS US GET PERMIS-SION TO INVESTIGATE...
IT'S JUST A START,
BUT NOW WE CAN SEARCH FOR THE EVANGE-LIST.
...BUT I HOPE WE CAN START OUR INVES-TIGATION SOON.
AND WE DO HAVE COMPANY 5 HOLDING THE FORT WHILE WE'RE AWAY...
YEAH, I'M WOR-RIED ABOUT IRIS-SAMA. I KNOW SHE HAD TO STAY BEHIND BECAUSE OF ALL THE PROTO-NATIONALISTS IN COMPANY 7.


CLUNK
UH... N-NĒ-SAN...
徳用
CAPTAIN HIBANA... IS THERE A POINT TO THIS?!
HEAVY..
YOU CAN JUST TOSS ŌBI'S JUNK OUTSIDE !!
SHINRA'S NEW DESK WILL GO IN THE CAP-TAIN'S ROOM!!
8
COULDN'T YOU HAVE JUST SAID NO?
THEY NEED TO LEARN NOT TO BOSS COMPANY 5 AROUND...
SHINRA HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!
AAAHHH ♥ THIS GRAVEL RIGHT HERE ♥ I'M SORRY ♥ I'M SORRY ♥ HEH HEH ♥ HEH HEH ♥ PLEASE, STOMP HARDER ♥
GRIND
GRIND
GRAVEL!! YOU PIECE OF GRAVEL!! SHOW ME THE LOWLY GRAVEL THAT THINKS IT CAN TELL ME WHAT TO DO!!

WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO TONIGHT? GOING BACK TO YOUR HEADQUARTERS?
STILL, IT'S GETTING PRETTY LATE... IF WE'RE GOING TO INVESTIGATE, IT WON'T BE UNTIL TOMORROW.
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU EXPECTING?!
WHADDAYA SAY, KITTY!!
WE GOT RANDOM PEOPLE STAYING THE NIGHT ALL THE TIME. WE'D BE GLAD TO HAVE YOU, TOO.
SINCE YOU'RE HERE, YOU MIGHT AS WELL STAY AT THE GUARDHOUSE.
MROWR!
ニャー!
BOOM
?!

HE CAN'T BE THAT UPSET!
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIM?
WHY IS HE AT-TACK-ING US?!
I ONLY HAD ONE!
STAMP
I TOLD YOU NOT TO EAT COMPANY 7'S DAIFUKU!!
STAMP
STAMP
STAMP
STAMP
STAMP
RRRRRRUUUUUUMMMMBBBLE

オOOHオH
YOU'RE DEAD.
CAPTAIN ?!
ボBWOOHH
WHAT DID WE DO?!
DON'T THINK I'M GONNA LET YOU OUT OF ASAKUSA WITHOUT PAYING FOR WHAT YOU DID.
CAN IT.

FWOOSH
WHOA!!
DD D BOOM

THEY'RE THE ONES THAT MADE KANTARŌ GO INFERNAL!!

THE REAL REASON THEY'RE HERE IS TO MESS UP OUR TOWN! THEY TRICKED US!!
WAKA!! WHAT'S WRONG?!
WHAT... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
藤ノ宮

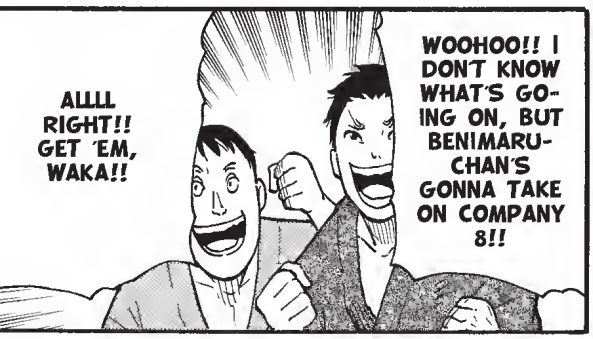
DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME!! I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES!
BWOH
CAPTAIN SHINMON, WHAT ARE YOU...?!
WAIT-WE MADE HIM AN INFER-NAL?!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU SAW, BUT PLEASE, CALM DOWN!!
T-TEP
POW

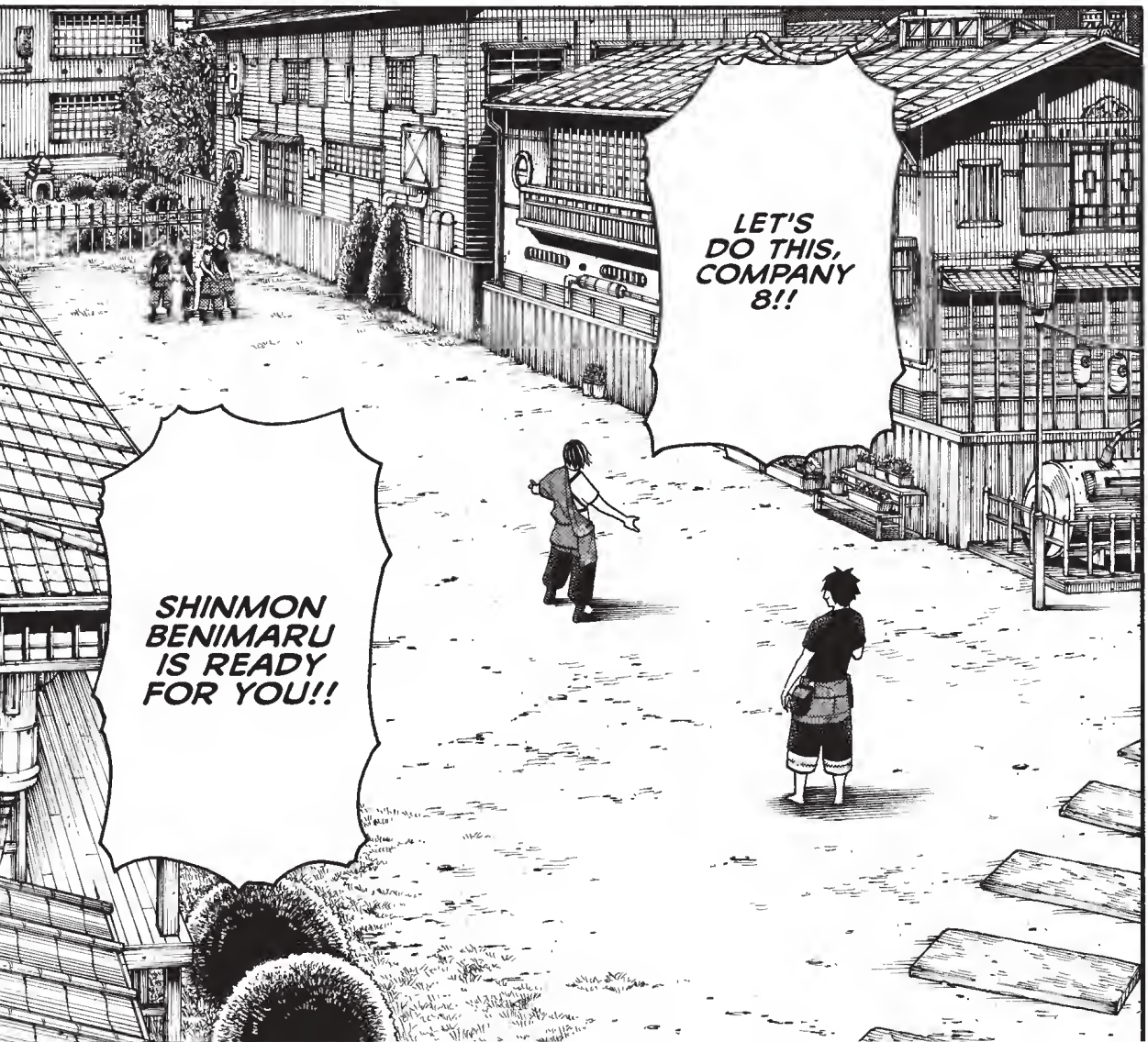
I KNOW WHAT I SAW...
NOW LET'S TURN MORE OF THIS TOWN INTO INFERNALS.
I KNOW IT WAS YOU.
EVANGELIST, MY ASS!! I SAW YOU BOTH PLOTTING TO TURN THIS WHOLE TOWN INTO INFERNALS!
I'LL BEAT EVERY ONE OF YOU TO A PULP AND HANG YOU OUT TO DRY!!
GO TO HELL. I DON'T NEED TO CALM DOWN!!

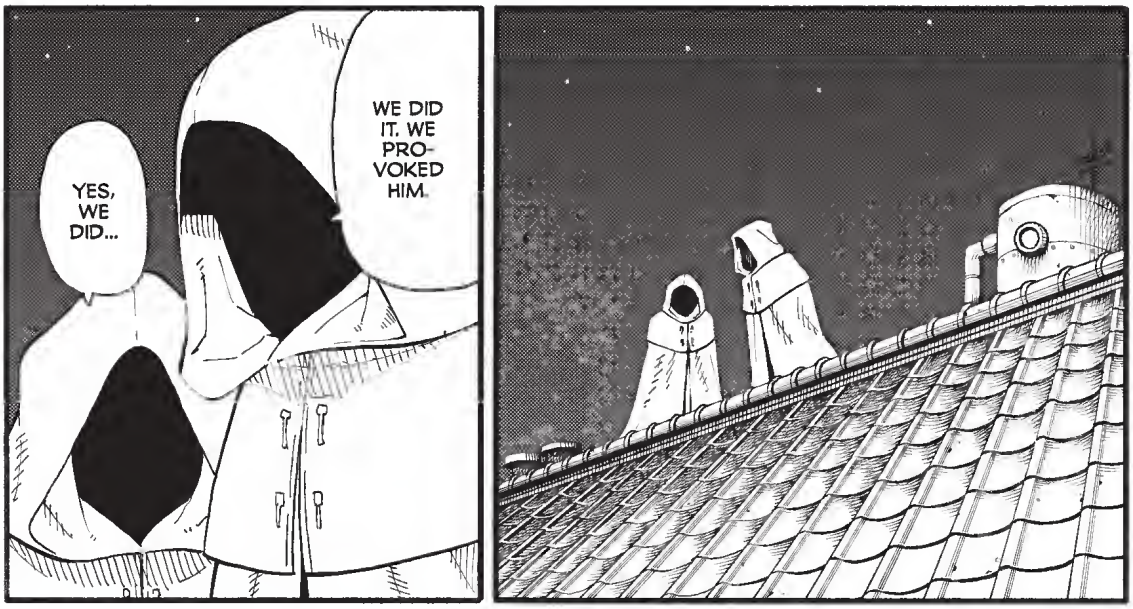
THEN BEAT ME AND PROVE IT!! IN THIS TOWN, MIGHT MAKES RIGHT!!
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO FIGHT ME, THEN FIGHT ME AND PROVE IT!!
ZSH
CAPTAIN... I DON'T THINK HE'S JOKING.
WAIT, PLEASE!! WE'RE NOT HERE TO FIGHT YOU!!

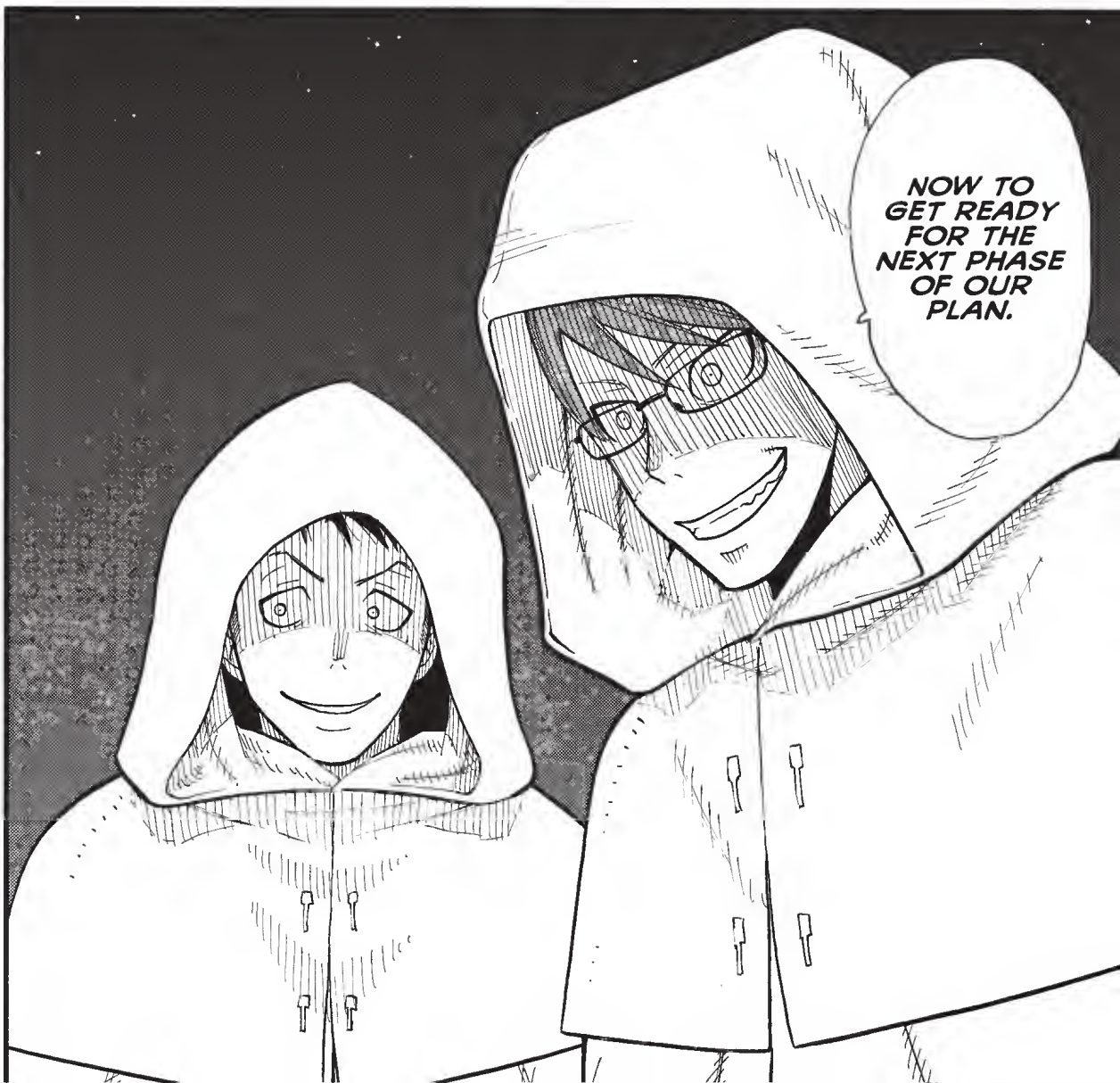
ALL OF YOU, STAY OUT OF THIS!!
I CAN BEAT THEM ON MY OWN!!

GET BEHIND ME...


ALLLL RIGHT!! GET 'EM, WAKA!!
WOOHOO!! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT BENIMARU-CHAN'S GONNA TAKE ON COMPANY 8!!

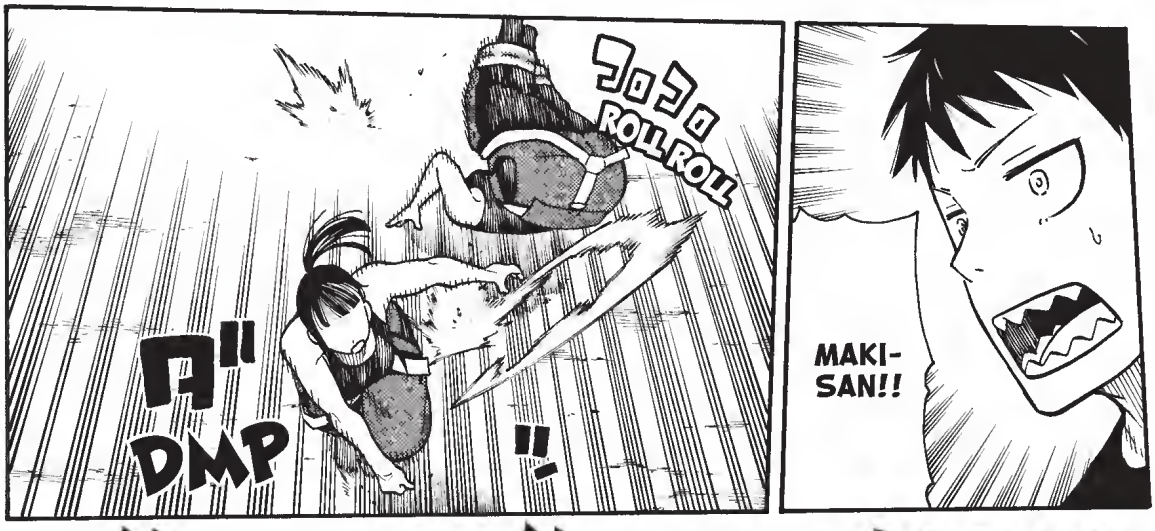

LET'S DO THIS, COMPANY 8!!
SHINMON BENIMARU IS READY FOR YOU!!


YES, WE DID...
WE DID IT. WE PRO-VOKED HIM.


NOW TO GET READY FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR PLAN.

WH BAM
HIDING BEHIND THAT ONE WOMAN?! IS COMPANY 8 A BUNCH OF COWARDS?!
GWHIRL
ギュル
GET DOWN, EVERY-ONE!
WHOOM
ドド
I'M A FIRE SOLDIER, TOO!!
SIZZLE
ヂヂ
SIZZLE
ヂヂ
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME, SIR!!
CLENCH
GWHIRRRRL
ギュルルルル
WAS THAT SUP-POSED TO REPEL MY FLAMES?

BOOM
ACK !!


ROLL ROLL
DMP
MAKI-SAN!!

SWOOSH
SWOOSH
SWOOSH
SWOOSH
YOU'RE WELL TRAINED.

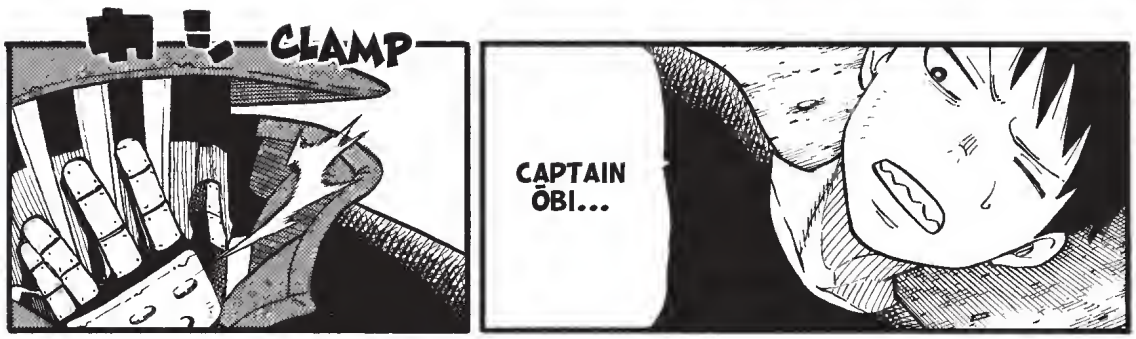
DON'T FORGET ME!!
BWOH
YANK
ACK!! JUST A...
FLING
KA
GAH !!
POW

GWHIIRRRL
VELOCITY CONTROL!!
BANG
BANG
BANG
ヒ°
HA
TWANG
TWANG
TWANG
WHIRL
WHIRL

FIRE YOUR PEA SHOOTER ALL YOU WANT-IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD.
TWANG
TWANG
TWANG
I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW MUCH OF YOUR SECOND AND THIRD GEN POWERS YOU CAN USE AT THE SAME TIME.
I AM AWARE OF THAT, SIR.
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
BWNN
TWANG
TWANG
TWANG
SWISH
TRAJECTORY CONTROL!!
IAI CHOP, FORM ONE
FWIP

SHA-PWIIING
シュピィィィ
KAGETSU.
[FIRE MOON.]
!!
FSHH
シュウウ
FWA-BAM

IS THAT ALL YOU CAN DO, COMPANY 8?!
SKIIID
HNGH!
UGH !!
RUSTLE
!
CL AP
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING TO MY COMPANY?

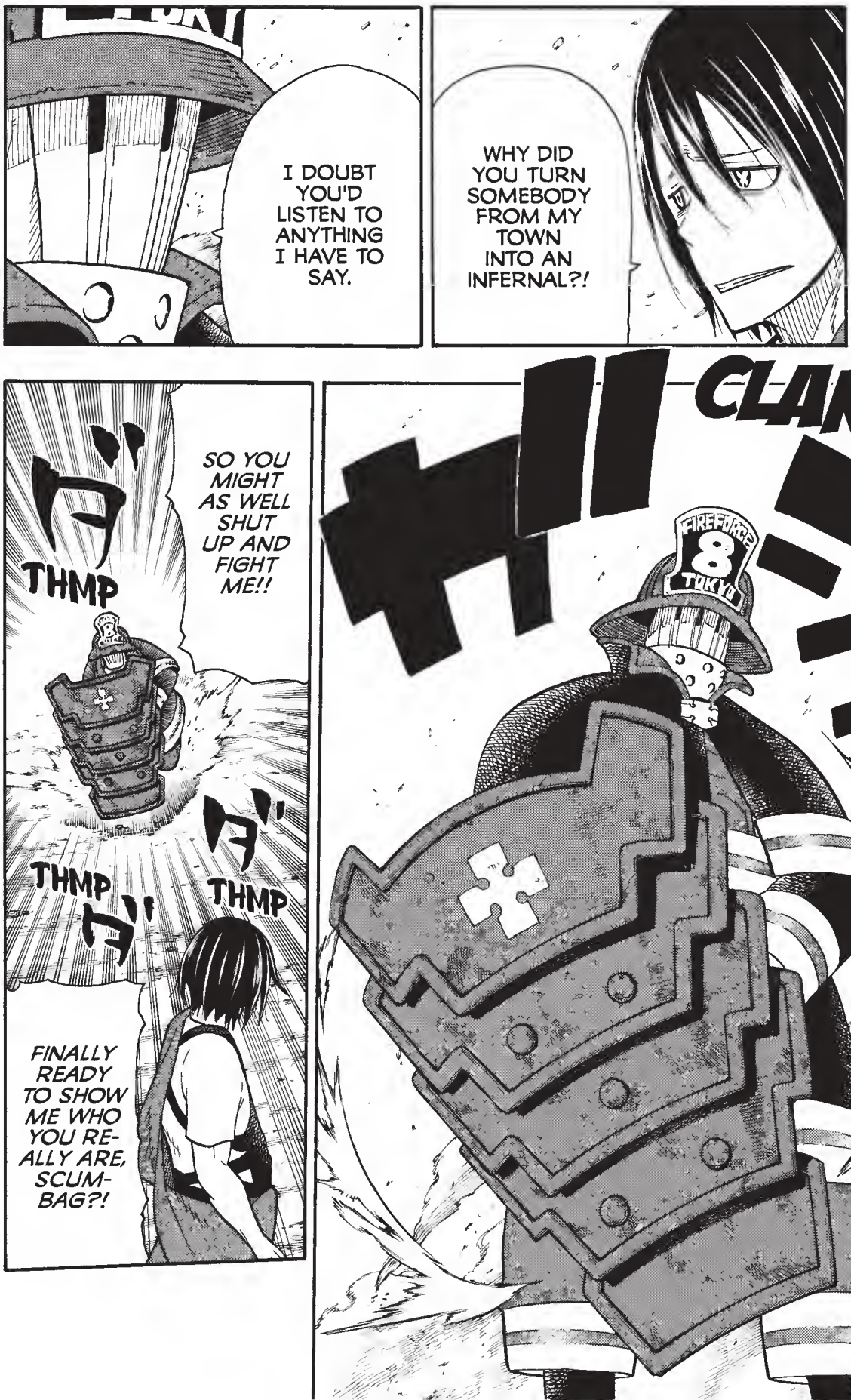

CLAMP
CAPTAIN ŌBI...

FIRE FORCE 8 TOKYO
LET'S SETTLE THIS BOSS TO BOSS!!
DU-DUN

FIRE FORCE

FIRE
FORCE

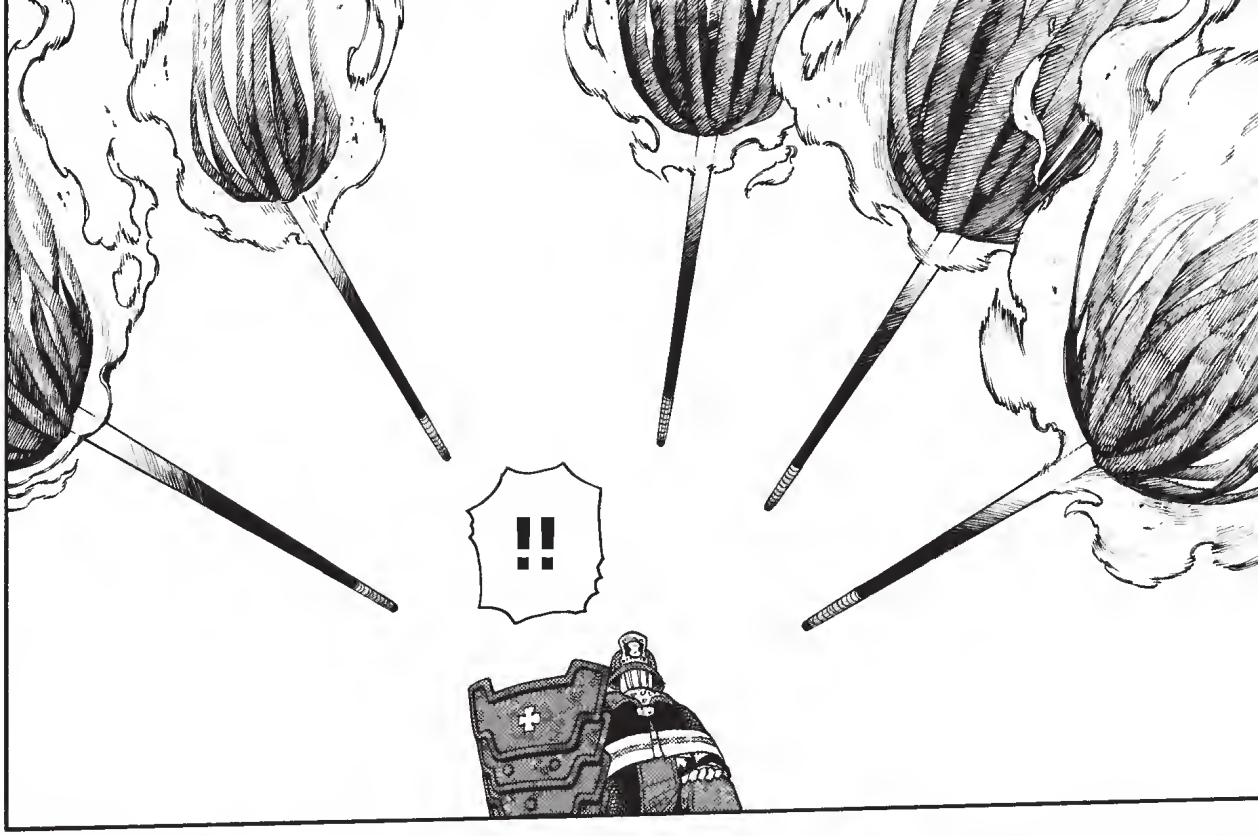
# CHAPTER XLII: ŌBI VS. BENIMARU


I DOUBT YOU'D LISTEN TO ANYTHING I HAVE TO SAY.
WHY DID YOU TURN SOMEBODY FROM MY TOWN INTO AN INFERNAL?!
CLANK
FIREFORCE 8 TOKYO
SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL SHUT UP AND FIGHT ME!!
THMP
THMP
THMP
FINALLY READY TO SHOW ME WHO YOU RE-ALLY ARE, SCUM-BAG?!

ズー
ZOON
SFF
ズー
ZOON
ZOON
ズー
ズー
ZOON
SFF
SFF
SFF
TOKYO
PUT IT OUT?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PUT OUT MY FIRE?
...

I DON'T HAVE ANY POW-ERS !!!!
I COULDN'T IF I TRIED !!
FIREFORCE 8 TOKYO
VWASH
CLANG
WHAT ...?
THEN AREN'T YOU SCARED OF THE FLAMES?

TOKYO
SIZZLE
GWIRL
IF YOU KNOW HOW TERRIFYING THE FLAMES CAN BE...
!!
CLAMP
DAMN RIGHT I'M SCARED!! THEY'RE HOT AS HELL!!
...THEN HOW COULD YOU TURN KANTARŌ INTO AN INFERNAL FOR NO REASON?!
I'M TELLING YOU, YOU'RE MAKING SOME KIND OF A MISTAKE!!
FWAM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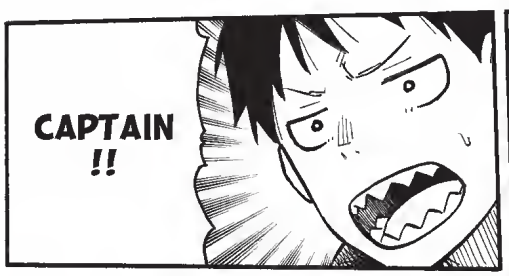
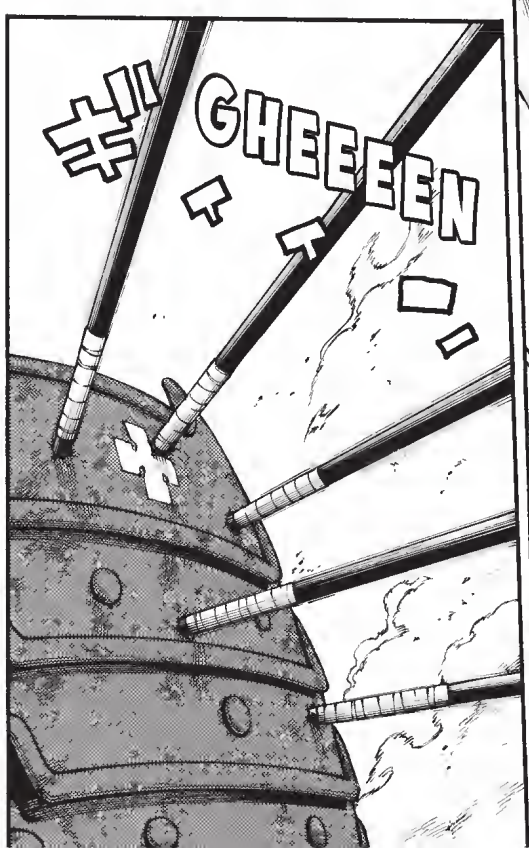

CAPTAIN
!!

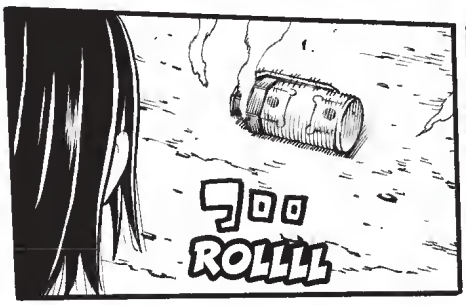

GHEEEEN

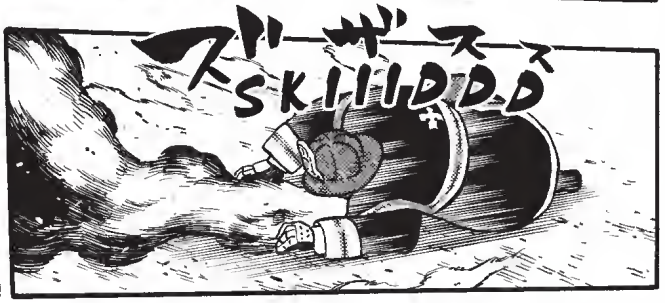
I SAW IT CLEAR AS DAY! THERE'S NO MISTAKE!!
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM

8
TOKYO
I TRAIN HARD EVERY DAY!
SECOND GENERATION, THIRD GENERATION—MEANS NOTHING TO ME!
RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE
FWUMP
POW
PING
AN EXTINGUISHER GRENADE ?!
ROLL

BOFF
ZOON
KA-KLONG
FIREFORCE
8
TOKYO
DASH

ズーン
ZOON


ROLLLL


ズザザザ
SKIIIDDD

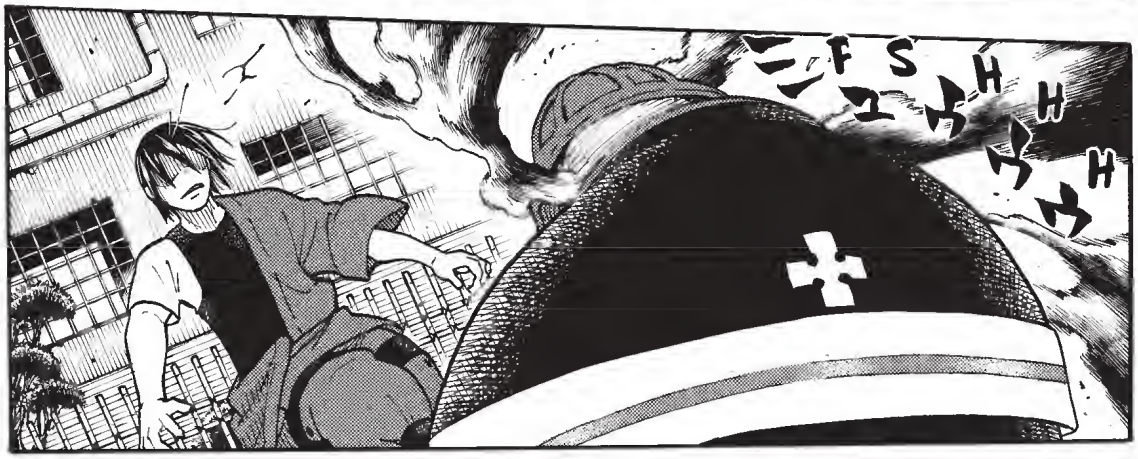
ズーン
BA-FWOOM

ZIP
THWAM
POP

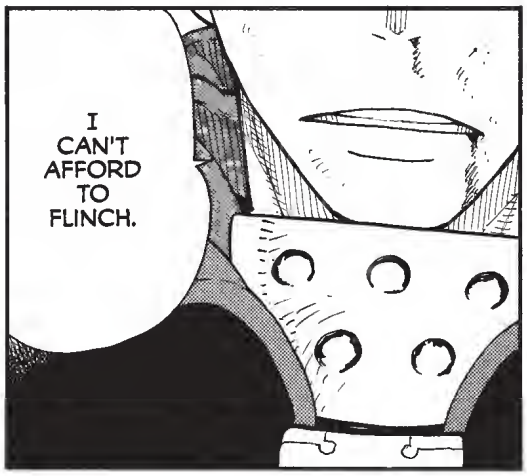
I'LL GET YOU AND YOUR...
CLAMP
TOK
!!
GRNG
ギュン
GZHNG
SLAM

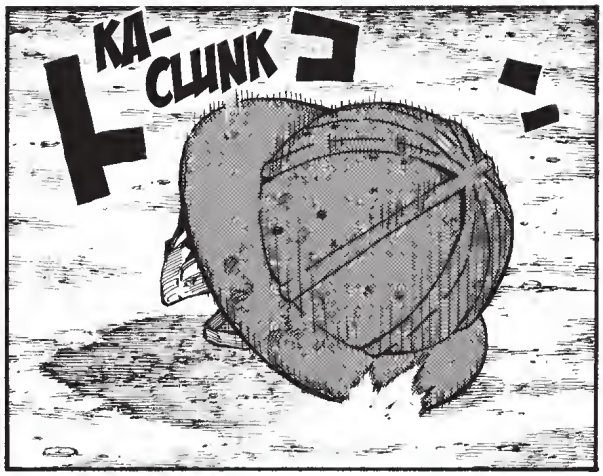
WHUMP
BO
OM

KONK
!!

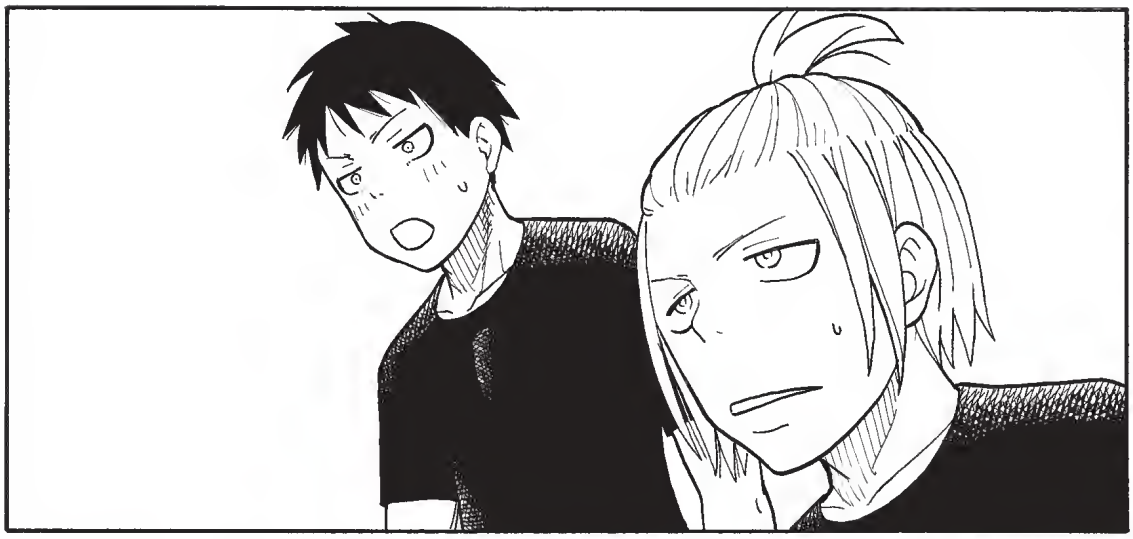

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

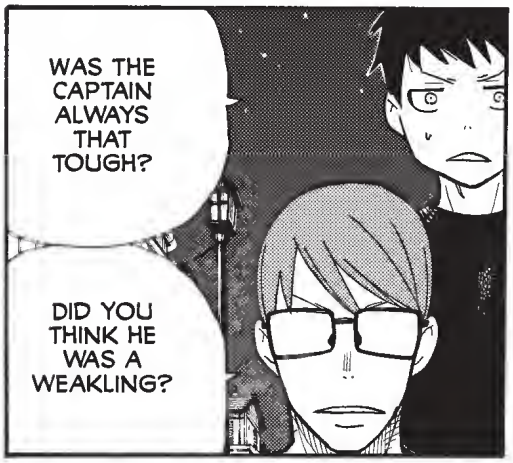
I FINALLY LANDED A HIT...
HUFF
HUFF
DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW TO FLINCH?


I CAN'T AFFORD TO FLINCH.


KA-CLUNK

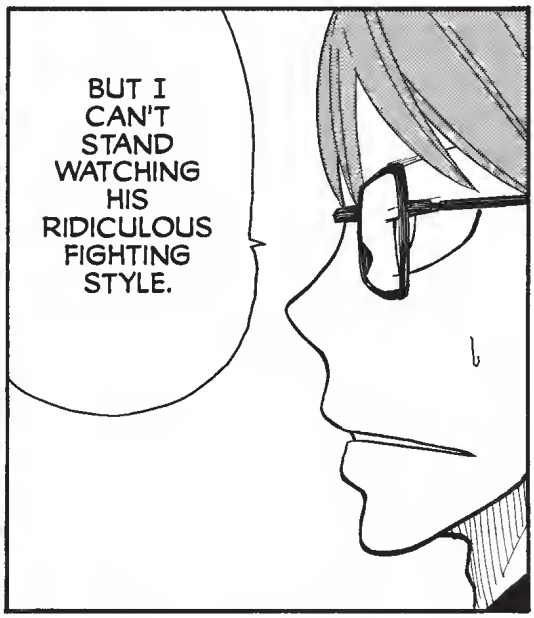
I HAVE THE WEIGHT OF COM-PANY 8 ON MY SHOUL-DERS!!



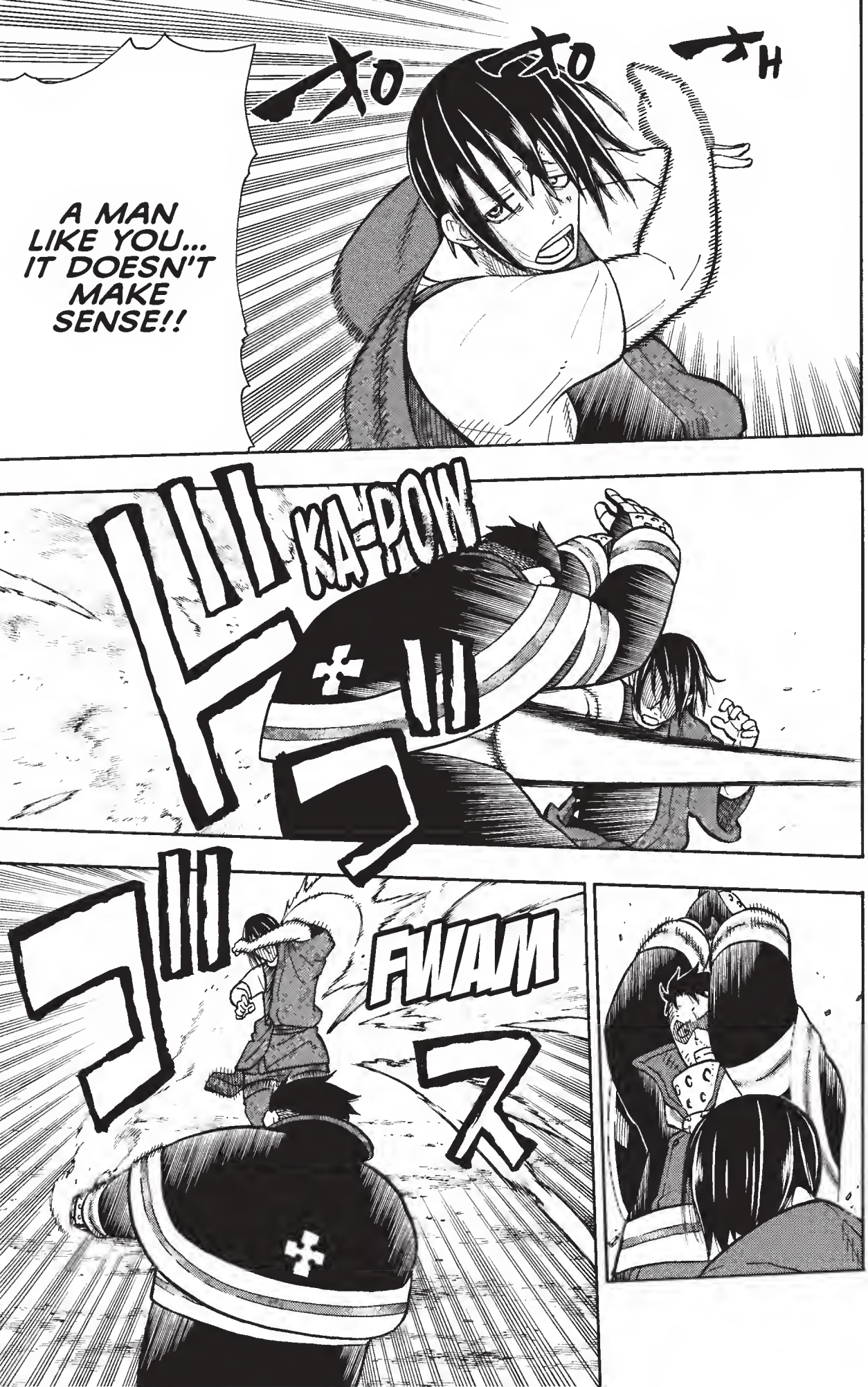

WAS THE CAPTAIN ALWAYS THAT TOUGH?
DID YOU THINK HE WAS A WEAKLING?

AND HE LANDED A HIT ON BENI-CHAN...
GET OUTTA HERE, THAT GUY'S NON-POWERED?

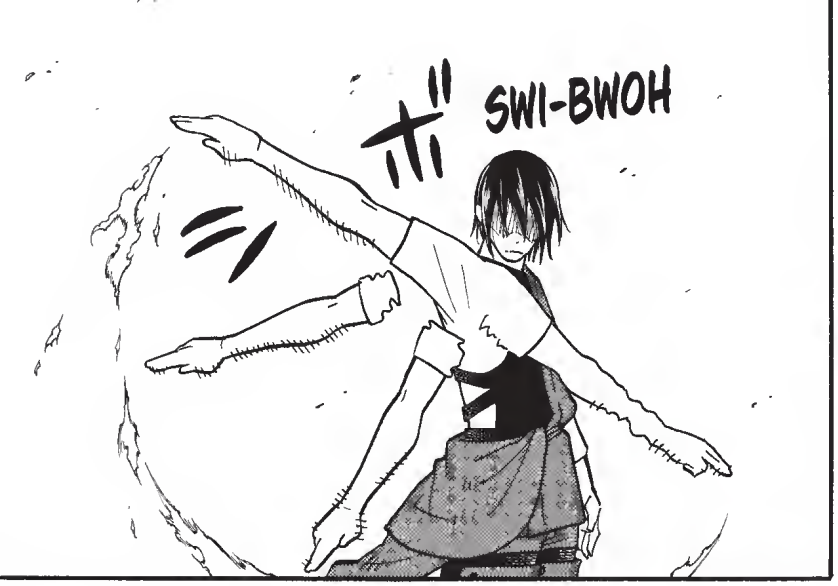
YOU'RE NOT AS GOOD AS BENI-CHAN, BUT GO FOR IT!
WOOOO!! NOT BAD, COMPANY 8 CAPTAIN!

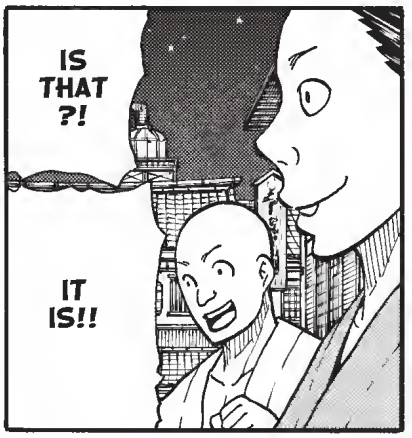

BUT I CAN'T STAND WATCHING HIS RIDICULOUS FIGHTING STYLE.

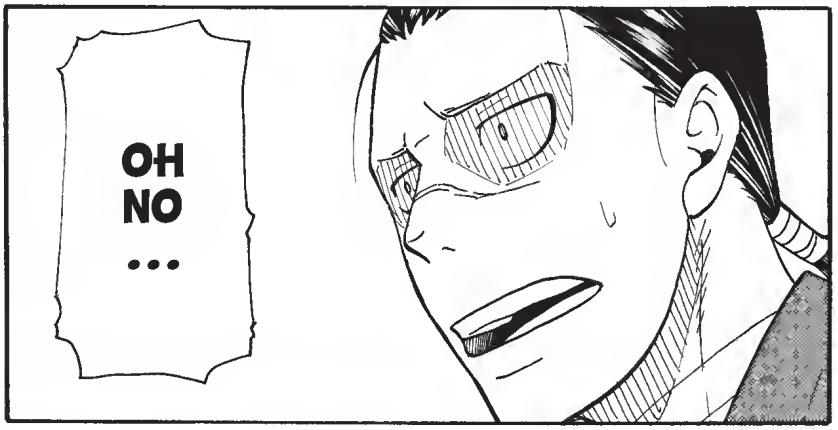
IS THERE ANY WAY TO STOP THEM?
AND THE ONLY WAY TO RESOLVE THE MISUNDER-STANDING IS TO WIN?
WE CAN'T LET THIS FIGHT GO ON MUCH LONGER.
BOTH CAPTAIN SHINMON AND CAPTAIN ŌBI HAVE A LOT OF CHA-RISMA THAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE TO THEM.
LIEUTENANT KONRO.
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON OUT HERE?
WHAT? THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE...
IT'S A BIG THROW DOWN. APPARENTLY IT WAS COMPANY 8 THAT MADE KANTARŌ INTO AN INFERNAL.
WHAK
WHAK
WHAK
WHAK
WAK-AAA!! GET HIM!!
SQUEEEE


A MAN LIKE YOU... IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!!
KA-POW
FWAM

--!!
--!!
SO I CAN'T TAKE YOU DOWN WITH A HALF-ASSED ATTACK, EH?
?!
THEN I'M DONE PLAYING.


SWI-BWOH


IS THAT ?!
IT IS!!


OH NO ...

WHAT'S HE DO-ING?!

IAI CHOP FORM SEVEN

SHA-BAM

**TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 6!!**

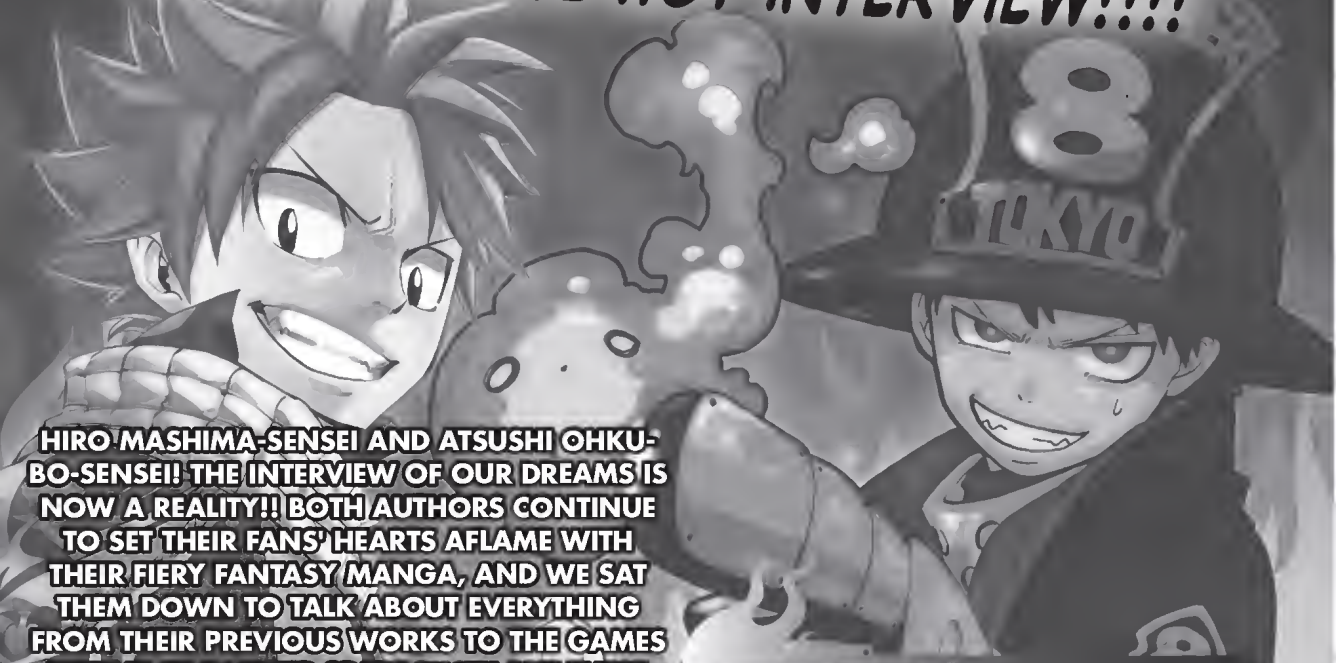
FIRE FORCE

# NATSU/SHINRA SCORCHING DOUBLE WHAMMY

HIRO MASHIMA & ATSUSHI OHKUBO
COMPLETE COLLABORATIVE ILLUSTRATION
& INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN *WEEKLY SHONEN MAGAZINE* ISSUE 27, 2016
(ON SALE JUNE 1, 2016)

# HIRO MASHIMA × ATSUSHI OHKUBO

## SEARING WHITE-HOT INTERVIEW!!!!



**HIRO MASHIMA-SENSEI AND ATSUSHI OHKUBO-SENSEI! THE INTERVIEW OF OUR DREAMS IS NOW A REALITY!! BOTH AUTHORS CONTINUE TO SET THEIR FANS' HEARTS AFLAME WITH THEIR FIERY FANTASY MANGA, AND WE SAT THEM DOWN TO TALK ABOUT EVERYTHING FROM THEIR PREVIOUS WORKS TO THE GAMES THEY PLAY IN THEIR SPARE TIME!! BUT THESE TWO HAVE ACTUALLY MET BEFORE?!**

### HIRO MASHIMA

Twitter @hiro_mashima

WINNER OF THE 1998 *SHONEN MAGAZINE* MANGA NEWCOMER AWARD FOR "MAGICIAN." HIS SERIES *RAVE MASTER*, WHICH BEGAN IN *WEEKLY SHONEN MAGAZINE* IN 1999, WAS A BIG HIT, AND WAS EVEN MADE INTO AN ANIME SERIES. HE'S BEEN WRITING BATTLE FANTASY MANGA ABOUT THE BONDS BETWEEN FRIENDS FOR *MAGAZINE* EVER SINCE. CURRENTLY, HE IS WORKING ON THE CLIMAX OF *FAIRY TAIL*! WHEN HE'S NOT WORKING, HE ENJOYS PLAYING GAMES WITH HIS STAFF!

### ATSUSHI OHKUBO

Twitter @atsushi_ohkubo

WINNER OF THE 3RD ENIX 21ST CENTURY MANGA AWARD IN 2001. THAT SAME YEAR, HE MADE HIS SERIAL DEBUT IN *MONTHLY SHONEN GANGAN* (PUBLISHED BY SQUARE-ENIX) WITH *B. ICHI*. HIS *SOUL EATER* ('04-'13, SAME PUBLISHER) WAS A BIG HIT THAT WAS ADAPTED INTO SEVERAL FORMS OF MEDIA. CURRENTLY, HE IS DRAWING *FIRE FORCE*. HIS UNIQUE CHARACTERS AND WORLD-BUILDING HAVE ATTRACTED MANY FANS. HE AND HIS STAFF DECIDE WHAT TO EAT AT WORK USING ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS.

**THIS ISN'T A FIRST-TIME MEETING ?!**

**QUESTION:** Two artists of battle fantasy manga, with similar age and career histories, now battling it out for the first time! (ha ha)

**ATSUSHI OHKUBO-SENSEI (OHKUBO):** Yes! Mashima-sensei debuted three years before I did (Mashima-sensei debuted in 1998, Ohkubo-sensei in 2001), so I've been really excited to meet him today!

**HIRO MASHIMA-SENSEI (MASHIMA):** Actually, this isn't our first meeting. I said hi to Ohkubo-sensei once when he was working as Rando Ayamine-sensei's assistant on *GetBackers*.

**Mashima (cont.):** We were both about 20 years old. How long did it take you to go from assistant to your debut?

**GIVING THE READERS SOME *MAGAZINE* FANTASY!!**

**Ohkubo:** Exactly two years.

**Mashima:** That's really fast. And if you don't mind my asking, if you were an assistant for *Magazine*, why did you debut in *Monthly Shonen GanGan* (ha ha)?

**Ohkubo:** The reason I debuted with *Monthly Shonen GanGan* is that Enix (now Square-Enix) was close to my house... (ha ha). So I brought my work to them, and thankfully they said, "Let's publish it." It's the company that did *Dragon Quest*, so I thought I should write fantasy. Did you always know that you wanted to write fantasy, Mashima-sensei?

**Mashima:** Oh no, not at all. When I was just starting out, I drew modern stories, too. I wanted to draw fantasy, but they didn't really do that at *Magazine* at the time, so it was actually pretty rough.

**Ohkubo:** Right, even *GetBackers* was kind of outside of the norm. *Rave Master* was more of a fantasy, so I guess it kind of paved the way.

**Mashima:** I talked it over with my editor, and I was told it can't be like a *GanGan* or *Jump* fantasy; it had to be a *Magazine* fantasy.

**Ohkubo:** So what does that mean, specifically?

**Mashima:** It means, if nothing else, to make it easy to understand for readers who aren't used to fantasy. I was young at the time, so there were parts where I thought, "They'll understand if they just read it!" but thinking back on it, I'm glad my editor wasn't so lenient.

**Ohkubo:** I see. Readers who know fantasy will fill in the gaps in their own imaginations, but if they're not used to it, you have to explain the rules of the world clearly, or they might get frustrated and quit before they get to the really good parts. Actually, for *Fire*

**Ohkubo (cont.):** *Force,* I don't always bother to explain; I just go for it (ha ha). I probably wouldn't be able to do that if you hadn't laid that foundation, and if not for the current readership.
**Mashima:** Now the way I've been doing it is so firmly ingrained in me that if I do another series, maybe I'll have to borrow some strength from *Fire Force* to leave more things out (ha ha).

**Question:** Was it the influence of other fantasy works that you've come into contact with that motivated you both?
**Mashima:** That's right. I like manga, but I loved *Dragon Quest.*
**Ohkubo:** Yes. RPGs are very popular among our generation. And I had this thought, "Because I can only draw fantasy while I'm young!" But here I am in my 30s, still writing fantasy (ha ha).
**Mashima:** We'll probably still be doing it when we're 50 (ha ha).
**Ohkubo:** And maybe there's a lot of, "Only in manga." For example, if you tried to make a live-action *Fairy Tail* or *Fire Force*...
**Mashima:** Yeah, there are some things that you might not be able to pull off.
**Ohkubo:** Exactly. So I want to draw a world that works because it's a manga.
**Question:** Allow me to ask you about each other's manga. Ohkubo-sensei, do you have a favorite character in *Fairy Tail*?
**Ohkubo:** Brandish! She's too cute!! Mashima-sensei's series have such cute girls, I look forward to every issue!
**Mashima:** Thank you very much (ha ha). Speaking of female characters, I like Tamaki. I've never seen a character like that, with a lucky lecher lure.

WHY MANGA? WHY FANTASY?

YOU LIKE THE GIRLS?! (HA HA) ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

**Mashima (cont.):** But it's actually funny without getting vulgar.
**Ohkubo:** Sexy scenes don't get so dirty when you make them comical, so I'm always keeping that in mind.
**Mashima:** I want you to transfer her to Company 8 so she can be in it more (ha ha).
**Ohkubo:** Thank you (ha ha).
**Mashima:** And Shinra's smirk when he gets nervous—that left an impression on me, too. I love drawing faces like that. I read it and thought, "It must be hard to keep going with that."
**Ohkubo:** He's not smiling out of overconfidence—he's really taking these problems very seriously, but he can't help smiling. But Natsu is a hero with a lot of confidence. I can't draw that type of character myself, so I really admire it when I see it.
**Mashima:** Yeah, *Rave Master*'s Haru was the angsty hard-working type, so I thought let's just take it easy this time (ha ha).
**Ohkubo:** I see! In my case, I tried to challenge myself with an upbeat character and failed, so we went in reverse order (ha ha). And I'm dealing in a somewhat serious theme with firefighting, which isn't really a good fit with a character who doesn't think too much, so that was part of it.
**Mashima:** I really get that from reading it. I feel like there's a lot of entertainment out there right now that doesn't care much about human life, but *Fire Force* takes it very seriously. You're really portraying life and death like a real thing, and I think that's amazing.
**Ohkubo:** Well, life was treated very casually in *Soul Eater* (ha ha), so it might be the pendulum swinging the other way.
**Mashima:** And I think it's pretty original that everyone's powers in *Fire Force* are fire-related. Usually you get all different types, right?
**Ohkubo:** I'm a little twisted, so I was like, "It'd be pretty interesting if everybody had the same power." The lucky lecher lure came from my twisted and kind of perverse nature, too (ha ha).

## HARDCORE!! GAME TALK!!

**Question:** This is your first weekly series, right, Ohkubo-sensei? How is the schedule working out for you?

**Ohkubo:** I'm surprised at how fast the graphic novels come out, but I do get breaks. When I'm not working, I play video games. Lately, I spend all my time on *Dark Souls 3* (the latest in the action-RPG series from FromSoftware). I've been through it three or four times now.

**Mashima:** Seriously?!! I've been wanting to play that forever, but I haven't gotten a chance to (ha ha). My staff even tells me, "If you like *Monster Hunter*, you'll wanna own this one!"

**Ohkubo:** I've been playing *Monster Hunter* since the first game, too, but now I'm taking a break from collecting honey (a standard item used in combinations) (ha ha). You're pretty famous for liking video games, Mashima-sensei. What are you playing lately?

**Mashima:** I just beat *Far Cry Primal* (the latest in the hit action-adventure series by UbiSoft). I've been playing a lot of western games lately.

**Ohkubo:** Western games are great. I'm hooked on them, too. You can really become the main character, and get immersed in the world. I like watching the really cool cut scenes, too.

**Mashima:** I like to play for the stories, too, so I'm the type to just keep watching cut scenes forever (ha ha).

*(After this, the two talked at length about first-person shooters, fighting games, and other video games.)*

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE ?!

**Question:** You're too hardcore! This isn't going in a game magazine, you know! Talk about your jobs! (ha ha)

**Ohkubo:** Yes, sir (ha ha). I get a full day off every week. What about you, Mashima-sensei?

**Mashima:** That's impressive. I think I could get a full day off, but I couldn't spend a day without drawing.

**Ohkubo:** You're always drawing on Twitter, too.

**Mashima:** If I don't draw, my art really suffers.

**Ohkubo:** That's true; I might be a little off my game on my first day of work. Or maybe I just don't want to tackle the manuscript (ha ha).

**Mashima:** For me, the first day is the most fun, and then I get tired of it as it goes on (ha ha).

*MASHIMA-SENSEI'S TWITTER FEED (@HIRO_MASIMA) IS FULL OF FUN DOODLES♪*

**Mashima (cont.):** By the time I get to the finishing touches, I'm already composing my next rough draft in my head (ha ha). Do you draw in order from page one, Ohkubo-sensei?

**Ohkubo:** Yes. Don't you?

**Mashima:** I start with the page I want to draw (ha ha). But I've changed my perspective lately, and now I'm trying to save those scenes for later so I don't get bored by the end. Like the pervy scenes...just kidding (ha ha). If there's, like, a scene with Natsu looking really cool, I'll save that for last.

**Ohkubo:** I know the feeling! It's important to have scenes that get you excited! If you're gonna be a manga artist, you have to have fun with it! (ha ha)

**Question:** We're almost out of time, so.... One last question: do you have any requests for the kinds of scenes or plot developments you'd like to see?

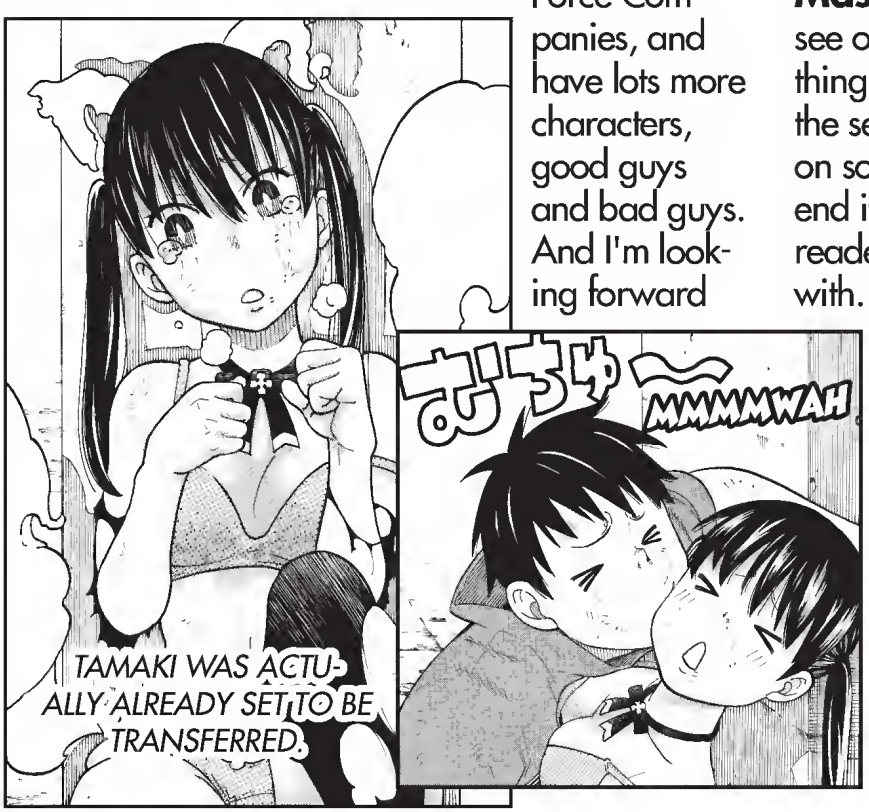
I WANT TO SEE THIS HAPPEN !!

**Mashima:** I want to know about all of the Special Fire Force Companies, and have lots more characters, good guys and bad guys. And I'm looking forward to when the world expands past the bounds of the Fire Force. And one more thing—this is very important, so I'm repeating it. Please put Tamaki in Company 8 with Shinra! (ha ha)

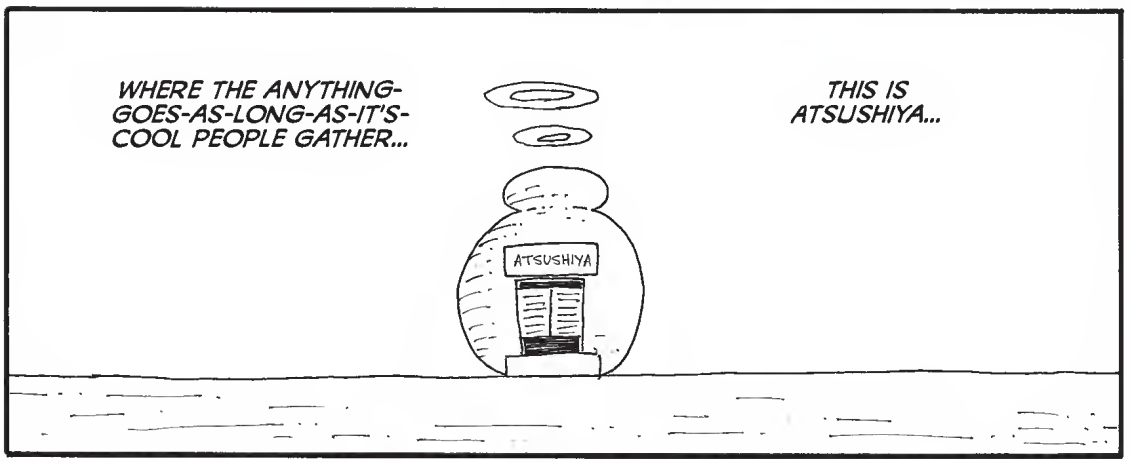
**Ohkubo:** Look forward to it (ha ha). For me, first, I want scenes with cute girls! (ha ha) Also, I'm reading *Fairy Tail*'s climax with bated breath. I want to see lots of Natsu doing big cool things for a long time. Whether it's fighting or drama, I want to see Natsu! I'm sure he's still got some crazy super-powerful techniques up his sleeve!

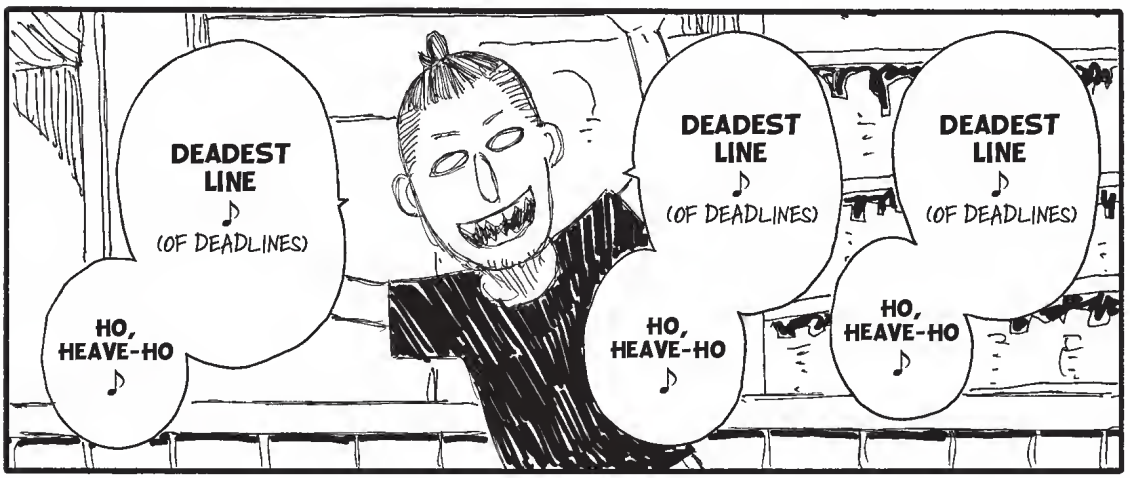
**Mashima:** You might see one soon. One thing I can say is that the series has gone on so long, I have to end it in a way that the readers can be happy with. Let's just say there definitely won't be a bad ending.

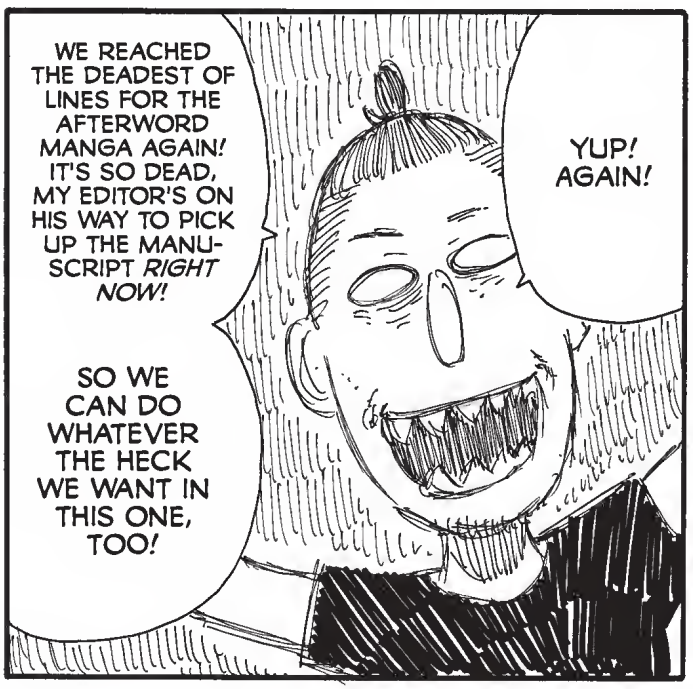
**Ohkubo:** Yay! I'm excited! I'll be looking forward to it with the all of the other readers!

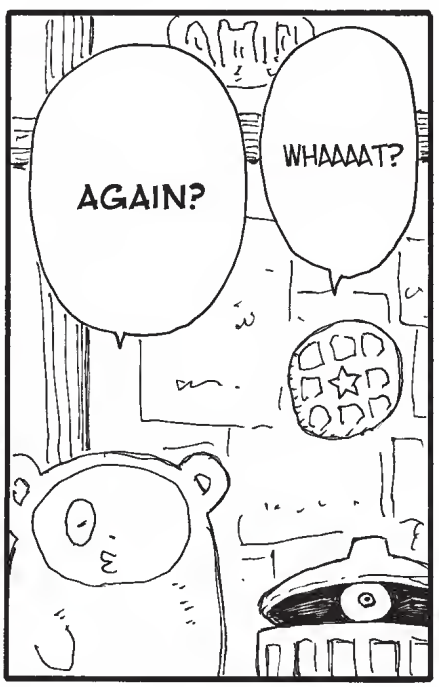


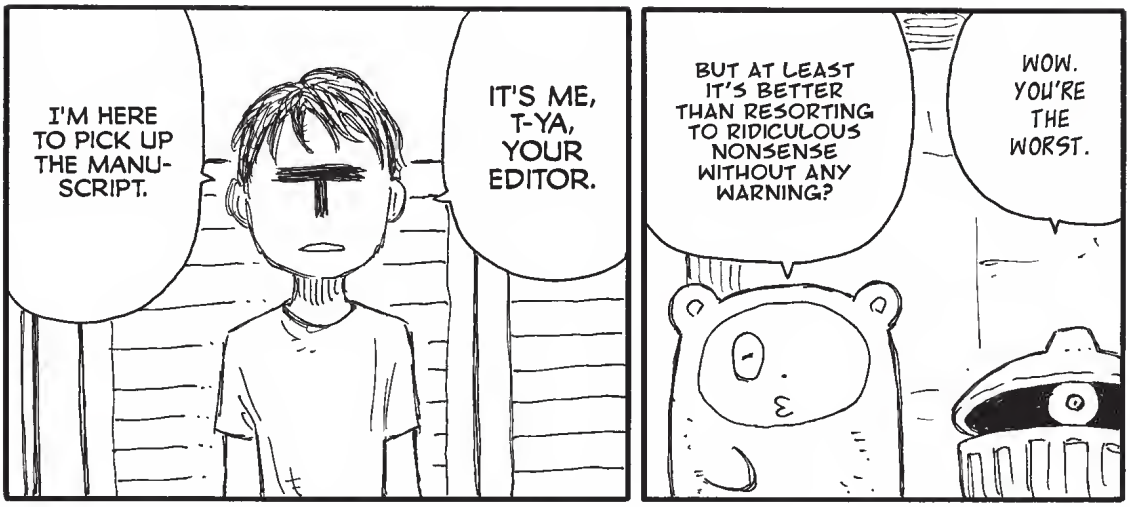
**TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 6!!**


WHERE THE ANYTHING-GOES-AS-LONG-AS-IT'S-COOL PEOPLE GATHER...
ATSUSHIYA
THIS IS ATSUSHIYA...

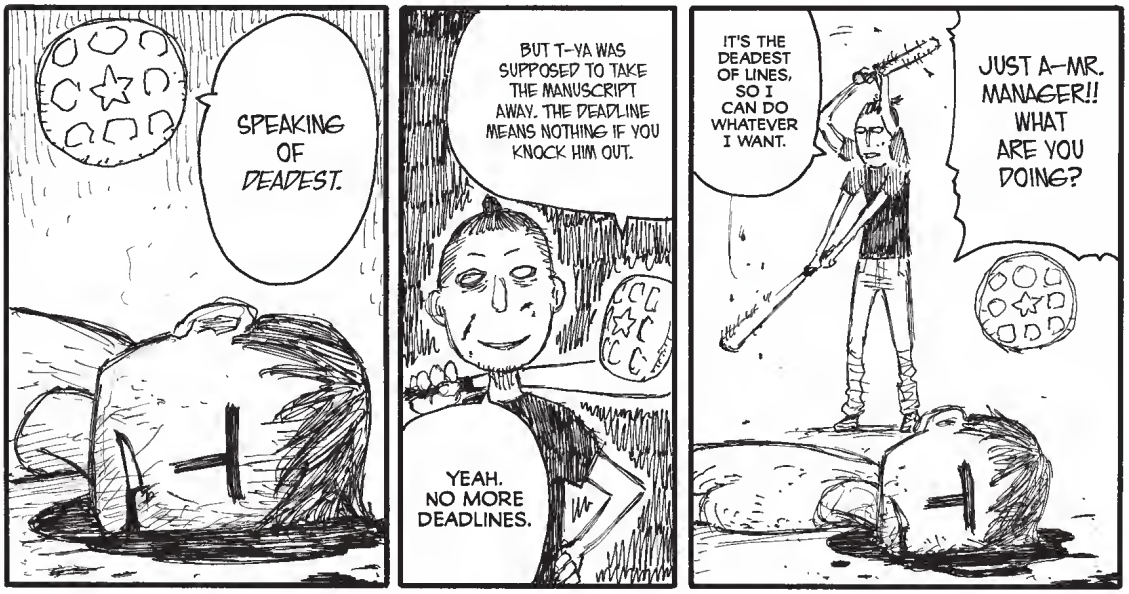

DEADEST LINE ♪ (OF DEADLINES)
HO, HEAVE-HO ♪
DEADEST LINE ♪ (OF DEADLINES)
HO, HEAVE-HO ♪
DEADEST LINE ♪ (OF DEADLINES)
HO, HEAVE-HO ♪


WE REACHED THE DEADEST OF LINES FOR THE AFTERWORD MANGA AGAIN! IT'S SO DEAD, MY EDITOR'S ON HIS WAY TO PICK UP THE MANUSCRIPT *RIGHT NOW!*
SO WE CAN DO WHATEVER THE HECK WE WANT IN THIS ONE, TOO!
YUP! AGAIN!


AGAIN?
WHAAAAT?


I'M HERE TO PICK UP THE MANU-SCRIPT.
IT'S ME, T-YA, YOUR EDITOR.
BUT AT LEAST IT'S BETTER THAN RESORTING TO RIDICULOUS NONSENSE WITHOUT ANY WARNING?
WOW. YOU'RE THE WORST.

WHAM!!


SPEAKING OF DEADEST.
BUT T-YA WAS SUPPOSED TO TAKE THE MANUSCRIPT AWAY. THE DEADLINE MEANS NOTHING IF YOU KNOCK HIM OUT.
YEAH. NO MORE DEADLINES.
IT'S THE DEADEST OF LINES, SO I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT.
JUST A—MR. MANAGER!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

# Translation Notes:

## Candle in the wind, page 16

A Japanese idiom that refers to someone on the brink of death is *fūzen no tomoshibi*, or "light in the wind." Normally the translators might have used a more obvious idiom for this modern era of electricity, but first, fire imagery is always appropriate in this series, and second, while Shinra probably wouldn't use the phrase if he knew this, by calling Arthur "a candle in the wind," he is also making a reference to The Candle in the Wind, the last book in T.H. White's Arthurian fantasy series, *The Once and Future King*.

## Signature stamp, page 46

Here, Takehisa is "signing" the paperwork to complete this registration. In Japan it is common practice to use an *inkan*, or signature seal, to stamp one's name on official documents, package delivery forms, etc., in lieu of signing one's name.

## Two infernals, page 53

In Japanese, there are many different ways to count things, depending on what those things are. In this scene, Ōbi is describing the infernals using the counter for people, while the officer from Company 3 uses the counter that signifies animals, meaning he sees the infernals as less than human—something that surely contributes to Ōbi's decision!

## Kaminarimon, page 86

Despite the steampunk embellishments, this temple is still recognizable as the Thunder Gate of the famous Sensō-ji temple in Asakusa. The big lantern, while being one of the temple's most identifiable features, has a dragon carving on the bottom that is supposed to be a charm to ward off fires.

## Hoppy, *motsuyaki*, and *monja*, page 87

Hoppy is a drink that is unique to Tokyo and was made as a substitute for beer, which was considered a luxury back when Hoppy was invented in 1948. It's mostly non-alcoholic, but is intended to be mixed with stronger (and cheaper) spirits. *Motsuyaki* is grilled organ meat (heart, liver, etc.) served on skewers, and *monja* (short for *monjayaki*) is a sort of thin, savory pancake that is cooked with all kinds of chopped ingredients such as vegetables, seafood, or even cheese.

## *Daifuku*, page 90

*Daifuku*, or *daifukumochi*, is a sweet Japanese treat. It's a mochi glutinous rice cake on the outside and red bean paste filling on the inside.

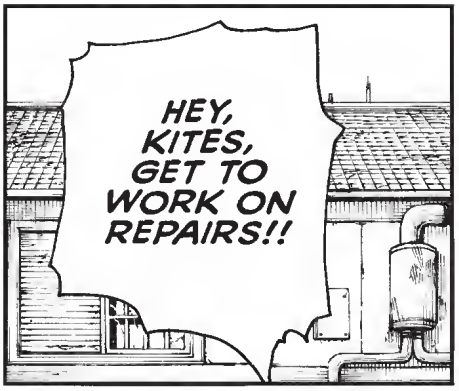
## Fire brigade and the flowers of Edo, page 99

Edo is the old name of Japan's capital, Tokyo. Back when it was called Edo, widespread fires were a common occurrence, and the people themselves were so hot-tempered that fights would break out easily as well, hence the saying that fires and street fights were the flowers of Edo. To fight these fires, a *hikeshi* system was formed. *Hikeshi* literally means "fire extinguisher," and it can refer to the organization, or to a single firefighter—the translators chose to use "fire brigade" for the organization and *hikeshi* for individuals. The *hikeshi*'s main method for putting out fires was to prevent them from spreading by destroying the buildings surrounding the fire. Of course, the system had its own problems, which led to several fights among *hikeshi*, thus increasing the "flowers" of fighting in an attempt to weed out the flowers of fire.

## *Matoi*, page 101

Just as they are being used here, a *matoi* is a kind of banner used by *hikeshi* during the Edo era to signal to the other firefighters which building or area is on fire. The *matoi-mochi*, or standard-bearer, would take the *matoi* to the roof of the building and wave it to catch the attention of the others. Each *hikeshi* brigade had its own *matoi*, and often there would be a race to see who could get to the fire first. This particular *matoi* carries the number seven, for Company 7.

## Hey, kites, page 119




Here, Benimaru calls these men *tobi*, which is the Japanese name for the black kite, a type of bird of prey. It's also a slang term for any sort of laborer who works in high places, like a firefighter or construction worker. It originated as a word for firefighter, because they jumped from roof to roof, and because the tool they used for pulling down burning buildings was a *tobiguchi*, or "kite's mouth," probably because of its resemblance to a bird's beak.

## Iai Chop, page 153

*Iai*, or *iaido*, is a Japanese martial art that specializes in techniques that involve drawing a sword and striking an opponent down in a single motion. As the reader can see, Benimaru has no sword, so instead, he uses his hand as a *shuto*, or "hand blade."

**Fire Force 5**

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